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*Henry Sillcox,*  
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XARIFFA'S POEMS.





# XARIFFA'S *POEMS*



PHILADELPHIA  
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## TO MY MOTHER.

---

DEAR Mother ! In the still and solemn hours  
That come so often in my lifetime now,  
Like rocks that rise to intercept the flow  
Of tides that sweep too swiftly past their shores,  
How tenderly my heart thy name adores !  
I see thee on thy pinnacle of years,  
Thy feet just trembling on the Future's floors ;  
Thy locks of strength by Time's relentless shears  
All shorn ; toward the Yonder World thine eye  
Uplifted yearningly. O Mother mine !  
As the swift footsteps of the years go by  
I cling to thee as to a thing divine,  
And feel how dark a path my life would be,  
Noblest of mothers, if bereft of thee.



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## XARIFFA'S POEMS.

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### THE BACKWOODSMAN'S DAUGHTER.

I WAS a wanderer from my place of birth,  
Seeking among the wide world's busy throng  
A peaceful harbor for my woe-wrecked heart.  
The charm of home was gone—the links of love,  
So blessed in their brightness, broken were,  
And I had turned away, striving to heap  
Upon the black grave of the past the dust  
Of dim forgetfulness.

#### Toward the West

I turned my troubled brow. I had heard much  
Of that fair land, where the untrammelled herd  
The echoing turf salutes with scornful hoof.  
Where verdant plains lie like unfolded scrolls  
Whose emerald pages Nature paints with flowers;  
Where the proud stag beside his timid mate  
Drinks from undesecrated streams; and all  
Seems like the Eden Garden ere the stain  
Of sin besmeared its beauty. There I turned,  
Not with the hope to find my joys again,

But with intent my misery to hide  
Out of men's sight for ever.

In the car

Which bore me on—whither I cared nor knew,  
So it was westward and away—I marked  
Among the travelers a swarthy pair—  
A woodman and his wife. Between them sat  
A child—a little girl—whose deep blue eyes,  
Beneath their golden lashes hiding, looked  
Like twin forget-me-nots by sunbeams kissed.  
About her pretty brow and shoulders bare  
Her yellow locks, not curled nor braided, hung  
In glittering ripples to her slender waist.  
So wonderfully fair she looked beside  
Her rough protectors in her fragile grace,  
She seemed like some frail wind-flower peeping out  
From the broad shadow of two gnarled old oaks.

Her lips, steeped in their early innocence  
Like morning buds in dew, parted at last,  
And her few words tripped lightly over them  
Like footsteps over flowers. “Father dear,”  
She softly said, and twined her little hand  
Amongst the old man's gray and stubborn locks—  
“Dear father, tell me, are we almost home?  
I am so weary of this clattering car,  
This dust and din, and all this careless crowd  
Of people whom I never saw before—  
Tell me, dear father, are we almost home?”

“‘Most home!’” the sire returned and laid his hand  
Upon her upturned brow; “and why, my child,

Dost long to reach that spot which ill compares  
 With those fair city scenes whence you have come?  
 Dost thou forget the rich man's splendid home,  
 The busy streets, with all their glittering crowds,  
 The gay shop-windows where each day you saw  
 So many tempting toys and wondrous books?  
 And dost remember how you loved to hear  
 The chiming church-bells in the steeples high,  
 And often drew your little hand from mine  
 To climb the steps, and through the doorways vast  
 Catch glimpses of Religion's love of show?"

"True, father dear," the little one replied—

"True, I did like the busy city crowds,  
 The lofty houses where rich people dwell,  
 The gay shop-windows and the pretty toys,  
 Because they were so wonderful and new  
 To my unpracticed eyes. In vestibules  
 Of solemn churches, too, I loved to wait  
 To hear the wings of music beat the air  
 When the deep organ did the Sabbath greet.  
 I well remember how I drew away  
 My humble garments, lest they might defile  
 The dazzling robes of those who could afford  
 In worthier garb to worship. Yet I knew  
 The heart lies naked in our Father's sight,  
 Howe'er the form is clad; and I was sure  
 That He could see my fervent love for Him  
 Beneath my simple gown. I envied none  
 Their wealth, nor did I wonder that they wore  
 Their best in presence of their King."

"My child,"

The father said, while to his rugged face

A smile came tenderly, "thy words are good ;  
But bear in mind that in thy Western home  
All this which thou dost own to having loved,  
Will, to thy beauty-loving eyes, be lost ;  
Such things belong not, darling, to the poor."

"The poor have memories just like the rich,"  
She gently said. "I can remember all,  
And make my mind a picture-book to read  
To little friends who have not seen as much."

Into the father's eye leaped a swift tear  
And trembled there, while with unsteady lip  
His questions still he plied : "But tell me why  
Thy little heart hath fixed itself, my child,  
So fondly on our lowly wildwood cot?  
There trials are, and hardships chain the hands  
Of those who love thee, and exacting toil  
Doth from affection steal her sweetest hours.  
How can that spot be brighter in thy sight  
Than homes where ease presides and care is not?"

Upon the woodman's wrinkled face the child  
Fixed her blue eyes in wonder at his words ;  
And then, as if her little lips returned  
The all-sufficient answer, she replied,  
"Why, father, *that is home!*"

The shining tear  
That had been trembling in the old man's eye,  
Fell, at her words, down o'er his swarthy cheek,  
And with a quick embrace of thankfulness  
He clasped his darling to his rough, broad breast,

Praising the Father that his child possessed  
That best of blessings, a contented heart.

She, smiling there within his loving arms,  
Recalled to him that little spot out West,  
Where, in the sunny forest-clearing stood  
Their lowly rough-hewn cabin, where each morn  
The merry brook ran laughing past the door,  
As if its freight were joy to all the world.  
“There,” murmured she, half dreaming in his arms.  
“The livelong day among the woody wilds  
I find such pretty playmates and playthings.  
The velvet-footed rabbit waits for me  
Beneath the sheltering cover of the fern ;  
The squirrel, chattering o’er his nutty meal,  
Flies not at my approach ; and pretty stones,  
With fallen acorns, fill my lap with toys.  
The cool moss seems to welcome my bare feet,  
And birds recite their poetry to me  
As perfectly as though I were a queen,  
And never ask if I be rich or poor !”

Across her hair, while thus she prattled on,  
The slanting sunbeams gently stretched themselves,  
Then stole away like worshipers content  
With having touched some consecrated thing.  
Before the day was wholly gone, the train  
Stopped at a backwoods station, and the child,  
Holding the hands of those whose prize she was,  
Passed from my sight for ever. She was home.

Long did I muse upon the simple scene ;  
And like a sharp rebuke the child’s sweet words

Sank in my restless heart.    She, with a cot,  
A few wild flowers and unfettered pets,  
Was rich ; whilst I, with all that wealth could give,  
A glittering home and hosts of titled friends,  
Lashed to the demon Discontent, was out  
Upon the world a wanderer !

Long years  
Have sped since then, but in my dreams by night  
And in my walks by day, by that child's voice  
I feel my sad heart haunted.    Echoing there,  
It hath for me a strange significance.  
Out of the blazing blue of noonday skies,  
And up beyond the midnight's starry depths,  
It seems to gently lead my chastened soul,  
And leave it trembling by mysterious gates,  
While its soft echoes whisper, " That is home !"

“J O H N.”

I.

I STAND behind his elbow-chair,  
My soft hands rest upon his hair—  
Hair whose silver is dearer to me  
Than all the gold of the earth could be—  
And my eyes of brown  
Look tenderly down  
On John, my John.

II.

The firelight leaps and laughs and warms,  
Wraps us both in its ruddy arms—  
John, as he sits in the hearth-glow red,  
Me, with my hands on his dear old head—  
Encircling us both  
Like a ring of troth,  
Me and my John.

III.

His form has lost its early grace,  
Wrinkles rest on his kindly face ;

His brow no longer is smooth and fair,  
For Time has left his autograph there ;  
    But a noble prize  
    In my loving eyes  
    Is John, my John.

## IV.

"My love," he says—and lifts his hands,  
    Browned by the suns of other lands,  
    In tender clasp on my own to lay—  
"How long ago was our wedding-day?"  
    I smile through my tears,  
    And say, "Years and years,  
    My John, dear John."

## V.

We say no more—the firelight glows ;  
Both of us muse—on what, who knows?  
My hands drop down in a mute caress—  
Each throb of my heart is a wish to bless,  
    With my life's best worth,  
    The heart and the hearth  
    Of John, my John !



## THE TORCHLIGHT PROCESSION.

**I**N the dark, with a child on her bosom,  
A woman is walking the floor ;  
And she moans while she hushes her darling,  
“ O God ! it is hard to be poor ! ”  
In the dark, with a child on her bosom—  
The dark of a comfortless room ;  
Not even a candle's dull ray to soothe  
The terrible ache of the gloom.

Down the street throngs a joyous procession,  
With thousands of lamps all alight,  
And the red glare of whispering rockets  
Ascending the silence of night.  
Oil enough for the multitudes marching,  
And banners and ribbons and flowers,  
While the blue of the zenith is blazing  
With grand pyrotechnical showers. .

All alone with her poor little burden,  
A woman with hungering eyes  
Soothes, with lips that are pallid with fasting,  
Her famishing baby's cries.

She catches the echoes of loud huzzas—

“Great God!” she sighs, under her breath,

“While Opulence squanders so much away,  
Must my little ones starve to death?”

Hark, the tramp of the marchers comes nearer!

Transparencies gleam past her door;

There “Our Cause,” “Our Kind,” “Our Country,”  
she reads,

But never one mottoed “Our Poor!”

And she looks at the flickering torches,

And counts the magnificent flags;

Then turns with a gasp to her darkness again,  
And her scanty, unseemly rags.

Like a river of light, the procession

Flows away down the stony street,

And the star-studded gates of the midnight

Close on the reverberant feet.

The music dies out in the distance,

All silently sink to their rest,

Save a maniac mother pacing the floor,

A little cold corpse on her breast.

## WIFE-WORDS.

### I.

**B**ELOVED one of my heart ! how bright  
The future lies before us !  
Bathed in affection's purest light  
It casts its sunshine o'er us ;  
And all the past of bitter hours,  
Or ones of sadder seeming,  
Forgotten are amid the flowers  
On which our hearts lie dreaming.

### II.

The gladsome earth we e'en might deem  
Contained no grief or sadness,  
So bright and joyous is our dream  
Of Love's unclouded gladness.  
Like twin-born flowers, our earnest hearts  
Shall pass their days united ;  
And when the bloom of one departs,  
The other will be blighted.

## III.

Clasped to thy fond and faithful breast,  
The links of life seem lengthened,  
And round our spirits softly rest  
The ties our love has strengthened.  
Thus wandering on, with hearts in one,  
Souls linked so naught can sever :  
We'll side by side seek that bright home  
Where love endures for ever !

## AT THE BALL.

NAY, do not bend thy lips toward mine ear  
To whisper, 'mid the music and the light,  
And dizzy dancers' maddening career,  
The story of thy strong heart's early blight.

I do not care to know. Of little worth  
I count that friendship which would fain exact  
As tribute due its accidental birth,  
The key to thy past's storehouse of grim fact.

Keep thine own secrets hidden in thy heart ;  
'Twixt them and me let Silence hang her screen ;  
I ask but to rely on what thou art—  
It matters little what thou may'st have been.

There is a Bluebeard's chamber with us all,  
Perhaps—a little key, a lock all rust—  
Where hangs, beheaded, on the gloomy wall  
Within, our proudest hopes, our noblest trust.

Each human life its solemn mystery hath,  
Its hidden love or its embittered hate ;  
Its weary wandering in some stony path,  
Its fruitless beating 'gainst the bars of fate ;

Its eager aims at empyrean heights,  
Its downward hurling among lowly things ;  
The fading from its eyes of dearest sights,  
The silent folding of its bruised wings ;

Its spring of promise, rich in bud and bloom,  
Its death and burial and its lonely stone,  
Hewn from the quarries of despair and gloom,  
To mark some grave to all the world unknown !

So, if thou hast thy wounds, display them not—  
True sympathy demands no show of scars ;  
Trust sponges from life's tablet every blot,  
And doubt no honest friendship ever mars.

But come, the balcony grows chill, I feel ;  
Back 'mong the merry maskers let us go,  
To hear the tap of the hilarious heel,  
And see them point the educated toe.

The rush, the whirl, the music and the glare,  
The masks that hide false faces, and the ends  
Encompassed by deception, all are there :  
Your arm—so—now, good-night, my best of friends.

## HOW MUCH DO YOU LOVE ME?

INSCRIBED TO ONE WHO ASKED THE QUESTION.

HOW much do I love thee?  
Go ask the deep sea  
How many rare gems  
In its coral caves be ;  
Or ask the broad billows  
That ceaselessly roar,  
How many bright sands  
Do they kiss on the shore.

How much do I love thee?  
Go ask of a star,  
How many such worlds  
In the universe are ;  
Or ask of the breezes  
Which soothingly blow,  
From whence do they come  
And whither they go.

How much do I love thee?  
Go ask of the sun  
To tell when his course  
Will for ever be done ;

Or demand of the dust  
Over which thou hast trod,  
How many cold hearts  
Moulder under the sod.

How much do I love thee?  
When billow and sea  
And star shall have told  
All their secrets to thee—  
When zephyrs and sunbeam  
Their courses reveal—  
Thou shalt know what this bosom  
Which loves thee can feel.



## EPITHALAMIUM.

ONE trembling foot upon the threshold golden  
Of that mysterious door  
Which soon will swing upon its hinges olden,  
Beckon her through the portal thus unfolden,  
And ope for her no more.

One foot on that untrodden threshold falling,  
One yet on girlhood's shore ;  
A voice on either side the portal calling ;  
Both tuned to love, but one almost appalling—  
One new, one known of yore.

Both tender, one half tearful, and both pleading—  
Yesterday and to-morrow ;  
She gives a hand to each ; the Past, receding,  
Cries, "Go ! may thy true young heart know no  
bleeding,  
And thy pure soul no sorrow !"

She lingers yet by girlhood's gladsome river,  
Her gaze upon the tide ;  
She sees the sunbeams through the shadows quiver,  
Life, lures her with new charms it has to give her  
Upon the other side.

The ripples reach her feet ; she knows not whether  
The more to joy or wonder ;  
And while she hesitates, the holy father  
Has said, "Whom God our Lord hath joined  
together,  
Let no man put asunder."

Let those who can shed no tears at a wedding—  
Death's jocund-hearted brother.  
Why should all tears be kept for funeral shedding?  
In marriage, too, its mystic pathway treading,  
Joy and woe kiss each other.

There the same robing is in novel raiment ;  
The parting pangs ensue ;  
The loved one's bliss received as precious payment  
For grief which finds no other sweet allayment  
With those who say adieu !

The mother sees a coffin in the bridal,  
Smile on it though she may ;  
Her own heart lies there, shrouded, suicidal—  
Bereft of what most blest life's lone abidal  
In her she gives away.

Yet sound the harp—cease, cease, O heart! to  
tremble—  
Joy to the wedded pair !  
Lost is the tinkling brass and sounding cymbal  
Of thoughtless years in the ennobling symbol  
Their clasped hands now wear.

They have gone forth on sunny seas united ;  
    Their sail, Love's pure white wing—  
Their rudder, Trust ; by which they both stand plighted,  
Watching the compass which their way has righted—  
    The golden wedding-ring.

Let them pass on, friend, father, sister, mother ;  
    With Hope's bright flag unfurled :  
Heaven loves the wedded as it loves none other—  
With perfect faith in God and one another  
    They may defy the world.

## THE SUDDEN SHOWER.

THE weather, one day, appeared *en masque*,  
With a deal of sunshine on—  
A flaunt of blue o'er his great rain-cask,  
Not a bit of cloud did he don.  
The streets arose from their slough of despond,  
The gutters felt mighty small ;  
The smiles came back to the face of the pond,  
The grace to the grasses tall.

Too tempting by far ! The belle and beau  
Looked forth at the masker gay ;  
Huzza for the satin that shineth so,  
For beauty and show to-day.  
Parasol tiny and lithe rattan,  
Bootee of patent leather ;  
Panama hat and sandal-wood fan,  
All shining with the weather.

Rich *poult de soie* and barège *Anglais*,  
And petticoats tucked to the knee ;  
Satinets, cassimers, *drap-d'été*,  
And elegant organdie ;

And gorgeous silks, ten dollars a yard,  
The exquisite green sunshade ;  
Young India mull—blest theme for the bard—  
All join in the masquerade.

The gayest masker amongst them all—  
The good-for-nothing weather—  
Stirs rich and poor and short and tall,  
All in a crowd together.  
Fashion flits by in her brocatelles  
And Beggary walks behind her,  
While Folly jingles her merry bells,  
And Youth flies past to find her.

And wee ones, aping the larger ton,  
Gotten up with wondrous pains,  
Make up in furbelows, and so on,  
Whatever they lack in trains.  
Fair babes in mull and Valenciennes lace,  
In the blinding sunlight squirm,  
And “mamma” glides with as grand a grace  
As if not robed by a worm !

And up and down, in pomp and parade,  
Simplicity, decked in satins,  
Flirts in this merry masquerade  
With wisdom of the Latins.  
But suddenly, swiftly, where in the world  
Did all this deluge gather ?  
Where are the blue and the sunshine whirled ?  
What under the sun ails the weather ?

Ha ! ha ! a merry old traitor he,  
And the votaries of the sun,  
In dripping, bedraggled finery,  
Acknowledge themselves undone.  
The gutters swell to respectable creeks,  
The streets to rivers have grown,  
While roseate lips and blushing cheeks  
At touch of water have flown.

Parasol tiny and lithe rattan,  
Bootee of patent leather,  
Panama hat and sandal-wood fan,  
In arms against the weather.

Rich *poult de soie*, and *barège Anglais*—  
Oh what a frightful muddle !  
Petticoats tucked and *drap-d'été*,  
Fine feathers dipped in a puddle !  
Green sunshade over ten-dollar silk,  
Is shedding copious tears,  
And young Swiss mull, not so white as milk,  
Looks much too old for its years.

Ha ! presto ! change ! fly, Jack, and begone !  
Fine fashion in *brocatelles* ;  
Beggary with disfiguring frown,  
And Folly with muffled bells ;  
Flee, one and all, in sorriest plight,  
The maskers all together,  
Each with a sputtering word of spite  
At the sudden change of weather.

## A TENANT'S PETITION TO A LANDLORD,

BY THE OCCUPANT OF A SHUTTERLESS HOUSE.

TO that Unknown whom auction sales have made  
A sort of myth or trenchant trick of trade,  
I would pour forth, in view of summer-time,  
My aggravated woes in rough-shod rhyme ;  
And were my simple foolscap lute or lyre,  
My landlord would its deepest strains inspire.

Perchance this good man never yet has spent  
His days in some small dwelling made to rent—  
A sort of tea-box with four windows placed  
Where hieroglyphics usually are traced,  
Unlined by Chinaman's zinc-loving eye  
To keep its precious contents cool and dry.  
A roof as flat as flattest contradiction,  
And ceilings low as some French tale of fiction ;  
So that we sit beneath them seared and mute,  
And see our children turning to dried fruit !

Great cracks hung up on hinges and called doors,  
See-saws laid over sleepers and called floors,

Walls beautified by spots where plaster was,  
And lank lath laughing with its broken jaws !  
Rooms planned by some one skilled in short division,  
Who thought, no doubt, in making this provision,  
Tenants, like dishes, if but closely packed,  
Run very much less risk of getting cracked ;  
Yet rent demanded which, in bank-notes small,  
Spread on the floor would nicely carpet all.

In such a house for one long year I've borne  
The yoke of inconvenience, and I've torn  
My silent shoulders with its jagged weight,  
And only to myself bemoaned my fate.  
I've frozen when it froze, and mouldy grew  
When dampness oozed our tomb-like mansion  
through ;  
When summer suns their dog-day courses ran,  
I've dreamed, at night, that some hot frying-pan  
Held my poor frame, and fancied I was fish  
Left, cook-forgotten, in my scorching dish.  
I've plead for painters—panthers would soon  
come ;  
For masons—my hearers suddenly grew dumb.

I showed the stony walls, with moisture lined,  
“ The powers that be ” grew suddenly stone blind !  
Thus, whatsoe'er I've asked for tenant's uses  
Has died a natural death of poor excuses.  
Finding it was “ no kind of use to talk,”  
I said, “ We will take up our beds and walk ; ”  
Beneath this roof no more my blistered brains  
Shall frame their prayers in purgatorial pains ;



Like wandering Arabs we must roam about ;  
Rest we in rented houses on our route,  
Fate and self-preservation cry, "Move out."

Still my resolves quite hard to manage prove ;  
They are not "balky," but they hate "to move."

With hopeful patience do they turn and say,  
"Make the house tenantable—let us stay !"  
My landlord, in this most enlightened age,  
When solving mysteries is all the rage,  
If I should tell what in this building housed  
Has these long lines of dull complaint aroused—  
If I should tell what ghostly fingers tap  
Upon the doors, to spoil my morning nap—  
If I should tell what spectres on the roof  
Make the tin sheets from shingles spring aloof—  
If I should tell what awful sights I see  
When sleep has blinded every one but me,  
What faces fill the unshuttered window-pane,  
I'm sure no tenant would live here again.

Still worse than all, when the long summer day  
Its panting heart doth 'neath our roof-tree lay—  
When other homes are cool, and blinds of green  
Tone down full many a happy family scene,  
Laying soft shadows in the parlors neat,  
And rendering home completeness more complete—  
In this strange house, where breezes never play,  
Where noontide lies upon our roof all day,  
Where each hot room an inquisition seems  
Which fancy fills with tortured victims' screams—  
Oh, here—believe me, 'tis no idle tale I make—  
Some martyr daily *burneth at the steak*.

Of these strange things I've borne my silent share,  
And told no living being what they are ;  
And if, kind landlord, you will grant one plea,  
No mortal e'er shall know of them from me.

In confidence I fain would say, of late  
Reports have got abroad about the state  
In which I keep my house. The other day  
I heard my baby had been seen to cry  
Because a grain of dust was in its eye ;  
And some one said 'twas just my careless way,  
I hadn't dusted the poor child that day !  
And then I heard, when we sat down to tea—  
My "gudeman" and my little toddlers three—  
Somebody saw the table-cloth was darned,  
And of this vulgar fact the village warned,  
And, with a shiver that portended chills,  
"This comes of women's meddling with goose-  
quills."

Another said our shadows on the wall  
Were not kept perpendicular at all,  
But moved their heads, and rocked them to and fro,  
As well-bred shadows would not do, you know  
I'm puzzled how these horrid facts got out,  
Who took the time to peddle them about ;  
Hosts of good friends had kindly called on me,  
Broken my bread and sipped the cup of tea ;  
But who the foe that did me this good turn,  
Try as I would, was more than I could learn.

I learned at last—discovered how 'twas done.  
You see, from morn till even does the sun

All day walk staring our small windows through,  
And finding out each trifling thing we do,  
Goes gossiping around among the folks,  
And tells our misdemeanors as good jokes.

I've not the least protection from his boldness ;  
He mocks me when I would repel with coldness.  
Now this is rather more than I can bear :  
Even sunshine shall not enter here to share  
My home and hearthstone, and turn traitor there.

I would like shutters, sir, to keep him out ;  
I cannot have such ruthless folks about.

Now, if you have the heart to tell me nay,  
The worst I wish you is some summer's day,  
When suicidal flies fall in the butter,  
Yielding the ghost with many a greasy splutter ;  
When moths grow sick of daylight, and grown  
brave

Seek in our cup of tea a watery grave ;  
When one's most cool ideas seem turned to oil,  
And one's afraid to keep them lest they spoil ;  
When melting moods grow rancid in the heat,  
And one can scarcely keep his temper sweet,—  
Then do I hope, if you resist my plea,  
You may be doomed to pass an hour with me,  
And in this furnace, seven times heated, learn  
How readily do *Blind* delinquents burn !

## MY WORLD.

The mind is its own place, and in itself  
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.—MILTON.

I HAVE a world—a world that is mine own ;  
A realm that teems with all things bright and  
fair,  
That blooms or perishes, exists or dies,  
Is sunlit, shadowed, peaceful or at war,  
As I may will. It is a changeful world  
Whose beauties turn to terrors, and whose joys  
Melt into gloom as meteors fade in night.  
To-day, the silver cascade's sparkling mirth  
With the swift flash of gorgeous bird-wings joins ;  
The grass is green, and laughing rivulets  
Under the weedy banks with shadows play ;  
While over all the cloudless heavens hang  
Like some triumphal arch, beneath whose blue,  
In chariot of gold, with flower-twined wheels,  
The Princess Royal, Youth, rides down Life's road  
Toward the Palace of Futurity.  
To-morrow, all things bright and gay have fled ;  
Stupendous rocks the dark skies seem to bear

Upon their craggy shoulders. Where the Sun,  
Provider prodigal for Earth, his bride,  
But yester lavished splendor, all is night  
And wild bewildering tumult, while the sea  
From the stern shores that manacle its strength  
Preaches its solemn sermons.

Tis my will

At times to woo the spirit of the storm,  
And wait his coming through the gates of cloud.  
The howling winds his lusty heralds are,  
Who shriek his advent over moor and main ;  
While through their clear, æolian trumpets roll—  
The breath of tempests and the blasts of woe,  
Weaving in weird yet wondrous harmony,  
Destruction's battle-march. Mantled in mists,  
His angry hands of noisy thunders full,  
The livid lightning flashing from his eyes,  
His wrathful brow with scowling fury black,  
The Storm-king comes—cloud-armies at his back—  
A veteran host whose hoary locks have waved  
In Nature's conflicts since creation's birth.  
The hills, stern in their resignation, yield  
Their brows, sunbrowned by ages, to the stroke  
Which seeks their hearts. The valleys sob, the rills  
Put up a petulant cry, the forest kings  
Bow down their lofty heads, rocks crashing fall,  
The angered mountains veil their battled fronts,  
The billows gnash their teeth ; confusion dire  
Claps her jubilant hands and Nature's queen,  
Earth, the all-beautiful, lifts her wet eyes  
In mute appeal, and vanquished lies beneath  
Her conqueror's gaze.

Again, a-wearied grown  
With hearing Nature's harp discordant strung,  
I turn aside ; and lo ! the sun rides forth  
Serene in splendor through unclouded skies,  
And like a royal lover proudly folds  
The sorrowing earth in his forgiving arms,  
Rebukes the angry seas, and woos the winds  
To rest. With gentle touch he fondly lifts  
The rose which fell beneath the storm's rough heel,  
And with a smile he dries the crushing tears  
Out of the lily's overladen heart.  
The frailest flower joys at his approach,  
And lifts its head to meet his kind caress.  
All hail to thee, supernal king of light,  
Who thus at once a universe canst sway,  
And stoop a daisy's little face to kiss !

I am sole ruler in my world, and make  
It calm and lovely, terrible and wild,  
To suit my mood. I dwell therein alone,  
Amid the hosts of things inanimate,  
The only animate one, or I do throng  
Its ways with merry feet and joyous hearts,  
And forms all grace and gayety, which float  
Like zephyrs to my arms, and offer me  
The smile of cordial welcome.

Souls are there,  
True as eternal truth ; and eyes whose light,  
Steady as vestal fires, illumines my life,  
And hearts whose faithful throbblings echoes are  
Of footsteps which crossed over them to death.

The unforgotten fill familiar nooks,  
And still, deep natures, calm as summer lakes,  
Offer Love's fragile bark safe anchorage.  
There all that's noble in mankind is man's ;  
And woman's womanliest attributes  
Surround her nature like a belt of stars.  
There sweet-lipped Sympathy takes up the cross  
Of sobbing Sorrow, and her burden shares.  
No serpent there e'er writhes beneath the rose,  
No love forgets—no friendships fade away.  
The good, the true, the beautiful are there ;  
The triune bright, whose mission is to teach  
Earth, after all, is one of heaven's gates.  
I can go hence once more among the world,  
Whose hidden rocks had wellnigh wrecked my trust  
In human kind, with calm, uplifted brow,  
A glad forgetfulness of wrongs, a heart  
Rejoicing to forget and to forgive,  
A spirit schooled to bear.

Thus do I live,  
A dweller on the earth, yet by the hand  
Of Thought, that mighty and mysterious Prince  
Of the fair House of Life, led up above  
It and its woes to dream my dreams and sing  
My songs in pensive solitude.

Whene'er  
The outer world is cruel unto me,  
When friends I've loved and trusted changeful grow,  
Or when misfortune lays her heavy hand  
Upon my brow, and human pangs press hard

Against my human heart, I hie me here,  
To this my inner world, and shutting out  
All that may cold or uncongenial seem,  
I kneel me down, and lifting up my voice  
Broken and full of sobs to Him who rules  
All rulers, I pour out my griefs and lean  
With all my woes on his consoling breast.  
Then doth my world—that world whose stilly shore  
Shut out all earthly bleakness—glow with scenes  
Of sacred beauty, as we see the walls  
Of dim and shadowy cathedrals hung  
With scriptural scenes. A warm and tender light,  
By rosy clouds subdued, illumines my soul ;  
And like an organ touched by reverent hands  
My heart peals anthems !

Go ye who have endured  
The blight of change and sorrow and deceit  
Which stains the outer world—go build ye up  
A temple fair, an inner world that teems  
With all that's pure and true and beautiful ;  
Where at the foot of its great cross thy life  
May kneel and show its wounds, and, healed, arise  
There will ye find a refuge from all ills—  
A balm for every pain ; in need, enough ;  
In place of hatred, love ; in place of foes,  
Friends constant as the stars. So shalt thou find  
That calm and all transcendent peace which comes  
Of the surrendering of earthly things  
To hold unveiled communion with thy God !  
And thou wilt find among the silent paths  
Many a broken altar of thy life,  
Beside whose ruined columns thou wilt bend,



Not mourning or aggrieved to see it thus,  
But thankful that thou didst not lean too long  
Upon its weakness. Thou wilt sigh, perhaps,  
The thistle and the clambering brier to see  
Where thou hadst planted roses, yet thoult feel  
That thorns make surer ladders than rose leaves,  
With which to scale the great eternal gates.

## KATY DID.

YEARS ago a gentle maiden,  
With a heart of love and truth,  
And a bosom all unladen  
With the sins of modern youth,  
Gave her purest, best affection,  
Without worldly-wise reflection,  
But with hasty heart-selection  
To one she loved too blindly—  
Too blindly and too well.

And the maiden's mien was simple,  
Like the heart within her breast—  
Heart where Truth had built her temple—  
Heart where Virtue's wings found rest ;  
Katy was the maiden's name—  
Modest name untouched by shame,  
Till her winsome lover came,  
With young Love's thrilling whisper  
Beguiling Katy's ear.

Oh he wooed her and he won her,  
As have men before and since ;  
Spreading luringly before her  
All the picture's brightest tints.

Life he painted well and fairly,  
Tempting pencil guiding charily,  
And when he besought her warily  
    To fly with him, she did, she did,  
    Poor, trusting Katy did.

Far from home and those who loved her,  
    With his promises so fair,  
He to distant scenes removed her ;  
    Then he left her pining there.  
Other hearts have blindly trusted ;  
Other love has, cankering, rusted ;  
But no mortal, woe-encrusted,  
    E'er fell a fairer ruin  
    Than hapless Katy did,

With a woman's adoration  
    Katy strove to hide the dart,  
And with blind infatuation  
    Pressed it deeper in her heart ;  
And with weary feet she wandered,  
And with aching brow she pondered  
On the hopes that she had squandered  
    For a vision and a falsehood :  
    Katy did, Katy did.

Back to scenes of early gladness  
    Katy's heavy footsteps turned—  
Love of home, with all her sadness,  
    In her bursting heart still burned.  
But no form sped forth to meet her,  
No loved lips were oped to greet her—  
Oh, no human flight is fleeter

Than that which flees from maidens  
Who err as Katy did.

Man may smile and fawn and flatter—  
Do the wrong so well he can ;  
Still the world approves, no matter—  
He is man, all-potent man—  
But let woman's step betoken  
That the slightest line is broken  
Of the laws the world has spoken,  
She finds the cold contumely  
That wretched Katy did.

Years o'er Katy's brow did linger  
Slowly, sadly, one by one—  
Time's unerring, tireless finger  
Wrote her race was almost run—  
When, one night, while stars were shining  
Midnight's dusky form defining  
In the moon's pale arms reclining,  
She saw a sight of wonder—  
Heart-broken Katy did

Lingering by the babbling fountain  
Where so often Katy dreamed  
Of that home beside the mountain  
Where her sun of life first beamed,  
Katy saw soft tresses flowing  
Round a figure bright and glowing,  
While enchantment she seemed throwing  
About poor Katy ever—  
Sad, silent, Katy did.

Katy felt it was a fairy,  
One of those kind-hearted sprites  
Who are drawn to those a-weary  
Of the world's accursing blights.  
Then the mystic wand was lifted,  
And the moonbeams softly drifted  
O'er the brow of the heart-rifted  
Child of sin and child of sorrow—  
Woe-stricken Katy did.

“Mortal,” said the fairy being,  
“See, thine earthly task is o'er !  
Soon from hence wilt thou be fleeing,  
Where no grief can visit more.  
From thy grave shall spring a mourner  
Which, from every leafy corner,  
Maiden's ear shall seek to warn her  
Of the danger of confiding  
In man, as Katy did.

“See, my wand its garb is weaving—  
Garb of hue which will not fade,  
With no gorgeous tints relieving  
Its translucent emerald shade.  
When the summer leaves are falling,  
When the grave seems coldly calling,  
When all mortal hopes are palling,  
She'll tell the world what Katy,  
Misguided Katy did.

“Dusky hours of autumn charming,  
It shall live the leaves among ;

And the hand that seeks its harming  
Shall find silence where was song.\*  
Over all the broad land sweeping,  
Shall thy mourning band be weeping,  
Singing while the world is sleeping  
The cruel wrongs of Katy—  
Katy did, Katy did.”

As the fairy ceased her speaking,  
Lo! a change o’er Katy passed,  
And to earth’s emmouldering keeping,  
Sank her weary form at last.  
Then arose a legion, mourning  
Shrub and leafy tree adorning,  
With their voice of mystic warning,  
Monotonously chanting,  
“Katy did, Katy did.”

When autumnal nights are coming,  
When the drowsy earth is still,  
Maidens listen for the humming—  
Humming rising o’er the hill,  
Of the green band swiftly winging  
To the dewy boughs, where swinging  
They may chime their choral singing,  
To tell what hapless Katy,  
Katy did, Katy did.

\* The Katydid becomes silent when the bough or tree is touched on which it chirps its busy song.

## BRING ME NO CAPTIVE PETS.

**B**RING me no captive pets! Give back the deer  
Its native wilds and its forest shade,  
The coolness soft of the shadowed glade,  
The far free hills where its home is made,  
And the flying herd which it misseth here.  
Ay, send him forth where waving branches spread  
Their quivering leaves above his antlered head,  
Where the fresh streamlet glides to meet the sea;  
Bid him go there and feel that he is free!

Bring me no captive pets! Yon prisoned bird  
Pines for a flight through the fresh free air,  
The cozy nest with its mate to share,  
The bending boughs in the valley fair,  
And the dancing waves, by the zephyrs stirred.  
Go forth sweet bird, thy fetters are a dream,  
The lilies bend above thy native stream;  
Thy mate, in sadness, waiteth there for thee—  
Go seek her side and tell her thou art free!

Bring me no captive pets! The bright gazelle  
Weareth, in sorrow, his gilded chain;  
He pants for the distant hills again,  
The heathery down and the spreading plain,  
And the gushing spring of the mountain dell.

Unbind his chain ; although its links be bright,  
Its golden glitter bears a bitter blight ;  
Forth to the far-off forest bid him flee,  
With each glad footfall shouting he is free !

Bring me no captive pets ! You cooing dove  
Folds in its prison its docile wing  
A suffering, helpless, lonely thing ;  
Its mute heart yearning in vain to spring  
Once more to the feathered flocks of its love.  
Bid it away ! Bid it go seek the home  
Where loved ones linger for the loved to come,  
And may each pulse as it speeds onward be  
A thrilling throb that whispers it is free !

Bring me no captive pets ! The skies above,  
The stars that watch o'er the bounding seas,  
The earth with its wealth of bloom and breeze,  
The birds that sing in the tall green trees,  
Are treasures enough for my heart to love.  
Chains, though they gilded be, still, still are chains ;  
The lightest shackles will leave cruel stains :  
Enough is ours ; alas ! why must we see  
Fetters on aught that God created free ?



## NOVEMBER.

### I

AS I sat by my silent hearthstone, alone,  
Alone,  
Watching a dying ember,  
I was startled to hear a deep sigh on the gale,  
And I said, Whence cometh that desolate wail?  
A voice answered, "Over the lips so pale  
Of November."

### II.

I shuddered that dreary name to hear  
So near;  
Closer I drew the ember;  
Triumphant had Summer till now held her reign—  
September beneath her bright banner lay slain,  
October had knelt at her feet on the plain,  
But ne'er might she hope the victory to gain  
O'er November.

### III.

Through all the dark hours, till night went by,  
Did I  
That doleful sigh remember;  
Lo! Summer was dead when the gray morning came,

And a voice which I shuddered to know was the same,  
Said, "I am chief mourner for Summer ; my name  
Is November !"

## IV.

Oh wildly wept Nature over the clay  
Which lay  
Cold as the brow of December ;  
And with mournful measure murmured the rills,  
And over the earth blew the blast that chills,  
While the old artist, Autumn, out on the hills,  
Painted November !

## V.

Ah, carefully now have I closed my door ;  
No more  
Do I muse over an ember ;  
I watch from my windows with wakeful eyes,  
For the Season's pale sexton, old Winter, to rise,  
And in shroud of snow and a coffin of ice,  
Bury November.

## FIDELITAS.

COUCHED on a bloomy bank I lay,  
Half dreaming, by the lapsing tide ;  
A form half angel and half fay  
I saw float downward to my side.

Her wings ethereal fanned my face,  
As down she sank upon her knees ;  
Her form, full of a dainty grace,  
Swayed like a blossom in the breeze.

Her locks, rich in that tint of bronze  
That's seen in summer's sundown skies,  
Clustered like holy-hearted nuns,  
To hide her bosom from my eyes.

Her lips were like a folded bud,  
And blossomed sweetly into smiles,  
While her blue eyes poured forth a flood  
Of radiance like twin starry isles.

Entranced I lay—enraptured gazed—  
The bloomy bank, the lapsing tide,  
All else forgot, as, half amazed,  
I watched the wonder at my side.

“Born of the wave art thou?” I said,  
“Or cam’st thou down from yon bright star  
Whose ray a shining path has laid  
O’er twilight’s fields to the afar?”

“Or art the fair embodied dream  
Of some lone poet of the earth,  
Which, formed to glorify his theme,  
Has fled the brain that gave it birth?”

“Or art a prisoned secret fled  
Some heart-cell, while the traitor Sleep,  
Drunk at the Feast of Dreams, betrayed  
The sacred charge he had to keep?”

“Or faithful Love, that on life’s march  
Hath wrong and chill and blight withstood?  
The jeweled keystone of the arch  
That spans perfected womanhood?”

While yet I spake, she seemed to grow  
Less and more less in every part,  
Till as she knelt beside me, lo!  
She was not higher than my heart.

Then came her voice—a tone between  
The fall of brook, the note of bird,  
The sweetest thing my ear had e’en  
In all its listening lifetime heard.

“I am not aught thou’st named,” she said;  
“No wanderer from the starry side,  
No secret from its prison sped,  
No deathless love personified.

- “I am a little foundling Fay—  
The pet of our good Fairy Queen—  
Bathed in a dew-drop every day,  
And lodged at night in tent of green.
- “She found me many a day ago  
Dying beside a daisy dead,  
Stretched out beneath a flake of snow  
That covered me from feet to head.
- “I lived, and kind Titania claims  
My life-rewards her every care,  
And when some goodly deed she names,  
I’m chosen her behest to bear.
- “I carry tears to help dissolve  
The pangs of dry-eyed Misery’s pain;  
I make the lamps of hope revolve  
Along the shores of life again.
- “I bear to sleeping babes the smile  
The youthful mother loves to see;  
The broken-hearted I beguile  
With gleams of golden memory.
- “I speak from empty nooks—from chords  
Some absent hand has loved to touch;  
From withered flowers—forgotten words—  
The silent things that say so much!
- “Now here my good queen bids me stray  
Among the bloom beside the wave,  
And offer you whate’er you may  
Most, from her store of blessings, crave.”

Then, smiling tenderly, she drew  
From out her bosom, ringlet-shaded,  
A little lock of hair, I knew  
My young love's gentle hands had braided.

"Wilt have thy youth? I stayed its flight,  
As swift it sped toward the vast  
Unfathomed depths of wrong and right  
Regretful mortals call the past!

"'Tis thine—its fields all unexplored,  
Its hopes, its dreams; yet calmly choose  
Between its doubtful joys restored  
And the experience thou must lose!"

I answered: "Tempt me not—so saith  
My heart which youth can claim no more  
Till life hath crossed the bridge called death,  
'Twixt time and the eternal shore!"

"Youth fades," she said, as down I pressed  
Upon the braid one burning kiss,  
"And all it leaves as dearest, best,  
Is oft some trifle such as this;

"So take the hair—it may ensure  
Thy heart from some ensoiling stain;  
'Tis well to hold some relic pure  
Of years that come not back again;

"And name some gift—is't pride of place,  
Or wealth's emoluments you crave—  
Fame, honor, aught that life can grace  
In its slow journey to the grave?"

I mused : “ Wealth? nay, not that I ask ;  
So often riches make one poor,  
And life beneath wealth’s golden mask  
Goes begging love from door to door.

“ Honors and fame? Nay, ’twere to see  
Hatreds grow thick about my feet,  
And crops of baleful jealousy  
Make all existence a defeat.”

She said, “ Take then prolonged years,  
Beyond life’s ordinary span,  
With all the ease that old age cheers  
And homage from thy fellow-man.

“ Thine aged steps I’ll shield from strife,  
Vexatious troubles keep at bay—  
Those petty ills that peck at life  
As hungry jackdaws peck at prey.”

“ Nay ! past the verge of usefulness  
What verdure can existence crown?  
Whilst living I may others bless—  
Not longer would I linger on.

“ Nor do I tremble as I note  
The parting of life’s slender thread ;  
We are but candles Death snuffs out  
When it is time to go to bed.

“ And what though round us may be cast  
That care with tenderest kindness rife,  
Despite it all, we die at last  
Of that most strange disease called Life.

“ So none of these ; and since my birth  
Passed by of fairy gift denied,  
I claim not for my days on earth  
Aught for my vanity or pride.

“ Yet, since to give, 'tis granted thee  
Aught known to earthly nomenclature,  
One boon I ask—restore to me  
My olden faith in human nature.

“ Root from my heart its growth of rue,  
Let simple trust my spirit cheer ;  
Let me believe all love is true,  
And every new-found friend sincere.”

“ Rash mortal !” so the fairy said—  
“ It is thy ruin thou'dst invoke ;”  
Then, as in grief, she bent her head,  
And seemed to vanish—I awoke.



## SUNRISE.

A TINT of red in the far east—a gleam  
Of gold upon the hills! Upon the sea  
A rosy tinge, as if the soft waves blushed  
At their oft-whispered farewells to the night.  
From gorge, and glen, and cool green valley floats  
A pearly mist—earth's grateful incense sent  
Upward to Him who said, "Let there be light."

Down in the rose's ruby heart, and deep  
In the pure lily's chalice lies the dew—  
That holy water gathered by the hand  
Of Nature to baptize the new-born day.

The balmy groves quiver with tuneful life,  
The silent blossoms bend in fragrant prayer.  
Earth slowly smiles, and through the mists which  
veiled

Her star-watched slumbers, lifts her face like one  
Who, half reluctant, wakes from dewy dreams,  
And scatters from her hesitating brow  
The rosy crown of sleep.

Lo ! in the east

Now gleam the golden lances of the hours ;

Gently they put aside Night's sable veil ;

The expectant skies glow with a deeper flush ;

The waiting waters throb like welcoming hearts :

The monarch comes ; earth shouts, the darkness flies,

And Dawn lies fainting in the arms of Day.

## GOD BLESS YOU!

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED TO A. H. S.

GOD bless you—in three words a prayer,  
Exalted, fond, devout, sincere—  
With health and strength  
And days of length,  
With joys of youth,  
With lips of truth,  
With heart that nobly beats to do  
As you'd have others do to you,  
God bless you!

God bless you on the land or sea,  
Where'er a wanderer you may be—  
With days of peace,  
With wealth's increase ;  
With life that shames  
Degenerate aims ;  
With heart kept holy in His sight,  
With hand that's brave to do the right—  
God bless you !

God bless you, as your life descends  
Time's hillsides steep, with faithful friends ;  
    With lot well cast,  
    With faith steadfast ;  
        With will to bless  
        Those favored less ;  
With strength to reach yon realm of bliss—  
Better and brighter far than this—  
    God bless you !

## MALVINA.

I NEVER cross the well-known portal  
Where erst thy glance of love met mine  
But winging back from spheres immortal,  
Thy radiant young face seems to shine.

I seem to hear thy voice in greeting,  
To feel thy soft hand clasping mine ;  
I seem to hear thy lips repeating  
The welcomes of the old "lang syne."

Thy books still keep their olden places,  
The flowers that loved thy girlish care  
Toward the sunlight lift their faces,  
And seem to ask if thou art there.

There are thy dainty vase and volume,  
Thy favorite nook and vacant chair ;  
Thy bird-cage by the ivied column,  
The pathway to thy place of prayer !

Each toy thy girlish fancy treasured  
For thy dear sake is cherished still ;  
And though the tomb thy form hath measured,  
Thy hallowed home it yet doth fill.

Thy voice in every room seems ringing,  
Thy footsteps echo in each hall,  
And thine own smile to life seems springing  
Forth from thy portrait on the wall.

Call ye this death? Nay; though thy brightness  
Lost may be, and beauty fled,  
Though hushed thy young heart's happy lightness,  
And dumb thy lips, thou art not dead!

Thou art not dead; nay, though the preacher  
"Dust unto dust," so truly saith,  
There is a higher, holier Teacher  
Saying, "Tis slumber and not death."

## THE BABY.

SHE is the blithèst, brightest bird,  
The sweetest, winsomest little fay,  
That e'er a loveless bosom stirred  
To own affection's potent sway.

Her locks are sunshine softly curled  
Above a brow they love to kiss ;  
Her eyes, twin stars from other world,  
Wandering in wonder over this.

Her cheeks are ruddy, sweet and fair,  
Where dimples play at hide-and-seek ;  
Her lips bright shores of gladness, where  
Rejoicing waves of laughter break.

For home she's one continual song—  
A sunny dispellant of care ;  
A star, a joy where troubles throng ;  
To earth a heaven—to heaven a prayer.

## TO AN OLD PORTFOLIO.

**T**O-DAY I broke the clasp—the key was gone—  
Lost years ago, with hopes and pleasures known ;  
When friendships sat so thickly on life's brim  
I thought to miss none that o'erflowed the rim ;  
When glowed the wine and foamed life's ruddy cup,  
'Twas then I locked this old portfolio up.

To-day I opened it—'twas like the gloom  
Which bursts from out the long-unopened tomb,  
Where dust and ashes but remain to tell  
That here we wept o'er what we loved too well :  
Relics of dead or dear ones living yet—  
Of friends forgot, or whom we would forget.

Here were old letters stained and dim with age,  
Some marked with teardrops upon every page ;  
Some gay and graceful as wood-flowers in June,  
Some dark with clouds which gathered ere life's noon.  
All breathe of loves which on youth's altar lay—  
All tell of loves for ever passed away.

Here were sweet songs—friendship's devoted lays,  
Ringing reminders of departed days,



Stilled are the hearts that to their music beat,  
Silent the tones that chimed their cadence sweet :  
The earnest souls that tuned them with the just,  
The loving lips that sang them turned to dust !

Here are some flowers tied up with ribbons blue,  
The roses withered, ribbons mouldering too ;  
And at my touch they crumbled into dust,  
Like earthly hopes wherein we've placed our trust.  
There was no record of the giver's name,  
And treacherous memory told not whence they came.

Friendships and flowers and hopes of early days,  
All, all have faded from my yearning gaze !  
In vain I weep, deplore them—all in vain ;  
The Past yields up our loved ones not again.  
Of mine there's but a memory and a tear,  
Or links, such as this old portfolio here.

Alone I'm left to turn these treasures o'er,  
Pieces of wreck cast up on Time's cold shore—  
Hopes that sailed in them, joys that bounded on,  
Lie buried in the ocean of Bygone.  
Of all that formed the young and joyous train,  
My blighted heart and hopes alone remain.

Who will he be that in some time to come,  
When this poor heart and these my lips are dumb,  
Will sit him down o'er pages I have writ,  
By lamps of love my burning brain hath lit,  
To read my records, mixed with memory's lees,  
And feel o'er them what I now feel o'er these ?

## SOMEBODY.

A LITTLE bit of mystery I try to solve in vain—  
Like some tormenting problem again and yet  
again ;  
In day-time and in night-time doth its hidden meaning  
vex me,  
Compelling me to love the more the more it doth per-  
plex me.

Entranced I hear my startled heart beat out its quick  
alarms,  
Swift would I fly—each avenue is sentried by her  
charms ;  
Like some enchanted circle, round my daily path they  
spread ;  
Across the mystic brink of flowers I do not seek to  
tread.

With smiles for me and frowns for me, beguiling and  
misleading—  
Sad for to-day, to-morrow gay, advancing and receding :  
Olden story ne'er embodied more bewitching, 'wilder-  
ing  
doubt—  
No name I give the mystery ; dear reader, find it out.

## A MEMORY.

SOFTLY o'er my senses stealing,  
Gliding like deep waves of feeling  
O'er my soul,  
Comes a dream that sparkles brightly  
As the tears that tinkle lightly  
Where they roll.

Long ago, when I was roving  
With a heart attuned to loving  
Faithfully,  
Ere I knew the stain that sweepeth  
Over souls the wide world keepeth  
Chained yet free—

I beheld a lovely maiden,  
With a spirit lightly laden,  
Full of joy :  
In her cheeks bright blushes tingling,  
With her mirth a music mingling,  
*Sans* alloy.

Hers a brow like summer morning,  
With the floating clouds adorning

Its sweet light ;  
Hers the glances like the gleaming  
Of the early sunshine, beaming  
Mildly bright.

Hers the lips like dewy roses,  
When the shade of evening closes  
Daylight's doors ;  
Hers a breath like fragrant clover,  
When the summer winds sweep over  
Balmy moors.

Hers a cheek carnation-tinted,  
And with dazzling dimples dinted ;  
While a smile  
Round her rosy mouth was playing,  
Peeping through the ringlets straying,  
All the while.

Oh, I loved her with a madness  
Which my nature's truest gladness  
Has undone !  
Trustingly my heart believed her,  
Never word or deed deceived her—  
Never one.

Youth flew forward, fondly dreaming ;  
True was every outward seeming,  
Till one day  
Sorrow his light course arrested,  
Met him boldly and broad-breasted  
On his way.

Then I learned, all broken-hearted,  
That the glorious links were parted  
    Of our love ;  
And I strove with bitter sadness  
To forget my fleeted gladness—  
    Madly strove.

Years have passed since last I met her—  
Passed in striving to forget her,  
    All in vain.  
Even now I would believe her,  
And with welcoming arms receive her  
    Once again.

Oh when once we yield to loving,  
To that power so sweetly moving,  
    And so strange,  
We may woo the world's caressing,  
We may win its worthless blessing,  
    But not change ;

For when once the chain has bound us,  
When for once those links are round us,  
    We in vain  
May the fetters seek to sever ;  
They will fester there for ever  
    In sweet pain.

## LINES TO CORA.

THEY will never come back, the bright beautiful  
days,

The gladdening days of the glorious spring  
With its blossoming crocus and jessamine sprays  
And its verdure that comes o'er the land like a  
king ;

They are fleeing for ever ; the freshness and bloom  
Of these sun-lighted days of the years of thy life,  
Like dreams dreamt on pillows of precious perfume  
They fade ere thou knowest with what glory they're  
rife

But say you the summer is coming anon,  
Its gardens all flush with ripe beauty and splendor,  
With its harmonies grander than those that are gone,  
With its sunshine more brilliant, its shadows more  
tender ?

Dost thou say that its voices are richer in meaning,  
The fruit that is mellow more luscious than bloom,  
The harvest that's golden and ripe for the gleaning  
Worth all of the spring's evanescent perfume ?

Ah ! love—'tis the seed sown in spring-time that grows  
 To spangle with blossoms the summer's green glade ;  
 'Tis the sapling of spring whose maturity throws  
 Over summer's hot pulses the cool cloak of shade ;  
 And the harvest that's golden, the fruit that is red,  
 And the gushes of song on the summer day's track,  
 Are the precious results of a spring that has sped,  
 Which will never come back—which will never come  
 back.

Say'st thou autumn will come when the summer is  
 gone,  
 With the purple and gold that embroider its glory,  
 And the song of the vintager greeting the dawn,  
 While with blood of the grape the winepress is gory ?  
 Dost thou say that the full-handed autumn can tender  
 Such riches as spring-time nor summer e'er knew,  
 While the gorgeous skies and the forests of splendor  
 Are rarer than roses and richer than dew ?

Remember that spring and its sunny caress,  
 Its welcoming warmth and its fostering mould,  
 Is the source of all this that thy autumn can bless,  
 Its clusters of purple, its harvests of gold !  
 For the stalk yielding grain and the grape yielding wine,  
 And the fruit-laden orchards old autumn must lack,  
 Were it not for the tendrils of spring's early vine  
 And the seeds of a season that never comes back.

Then gather now, darling, the delicate bloom  
 Of the crocus and jasmine and clambering rose ;  
 Extract from their petals the precious perfume,  
 Thy life to embalm as it draws to a close ;

Scatter seeds while the days of thy years are but few,  
Broadcast upon intellect's nourishing mould,  
That the sunshine of youth and its fostering dew  
May yield thee a harvest of beauty untold.

For the spring-time of youth quickly fadeth away  
And the swift summers perish on time's sterile shore ;  
All the autumn's rich glory fast falls to decay  
And winter's chill hillsides are ours—nothing more.  
But if in the seed-time thou'st planted aright,  
For each season of life shall some blessing arise,  
Till the Spring-time Eternal shall bloom on thy sight,  
And thy wandering feet roam the star-sprinkled  
skies.



## THE SLAUGHTERED CRANE.

'T WAS summer, and the noonday sun shone down  
With burning fervor on the land and sea ;  
The wandering winds had sung themselves to sleep,  
And hid their folded pinions in the haunts  
Which no man knows. The clouds lay furled away  
Like useless sails upon a bark becalmed ;  
And not a shadow crossed the blazing sky,  
Which spread itself unbrokenly away,  
One boundless breadth, monotonously blue.  
There was no hum of life in grassy depths,  
The cheery chirr of grasshopper was hushed,  
The butterfly hung idle on the rose,  
And insects slumbered in the sleepy flowers.  
The pasturing herds their fragrant food resigned,  
And sought the sluggish pools or cooling shade,  
While woolly flocks laid down their fleecy forms  
In drowsy rest beneath widespreading trees.  
There was a weighty silence in the air—  
A hush that awed, a quiet that oppressed.  
Not even a steepled bell swung out its tones  
To break the stillness of the Sabbath noon ;  
And Nature, like the olden Magi, bowed  
In prostrate worship to her god, the sun.

Parching with thirst, a scorned and lonely bird  
Deep in the forest shadows songless sat.  
No gentle gale his burning bosom cooled,  
No scented breeze beguiled his idle wings.  
The very denseness of the leafy shade  
Shut out the air for which he drooped and pined.  
He stretched his slender neck and gazed abroad :  
He saw bright fields of grain and glassy streams,  
The spicy swamp, the clover-sprinkled plain,  
And, tempted by their peaceful loveliness,  
He poised himself, then flapped his heavy wings,  
And rising lazily upon the air,  
Soared from the wooded depths away, away.  
His flight was far, and for his wearied wing  
He sought at last some quiet resting-place.  
An elm stood near which reared its branches high  
And o'er the stream which slumbered at its base  
Cast a refreshing shade. With one swift swoop  
He sank among the thick inviting leaves,  
And folded there his wings. The uncouth bird,  
With harsh, discordant note and plumage dull,  
In his own ugliness secured from harm,  
Contented felt, and with confiding trust  
Stroked his coarse plumes, or plucked with busy  
    beak  
His ruffled pinions, while with yearning note  
He wooed his mate to follow him.

Alas !

Is earth so full of guilt there is no room  
For innocence to sleep unguarded there?  
Is Wrong so ready and is Might so strong  
That Peace must always rest upon her arms?

A shadow, human in its shape, swept o'er  
The steely mirror of the silent stream ;  
A cautious step crept o'er the burning sand,  
A searching eye the lonely bird descried ;  
Then, swift as thought, the deadly rifle ball  
Sped through the Sabbath sunshine to its grave  
In that poor heart !

With one wild cry of woe,  
Which seemed to call on Heaven to note the deed,  
The doomed bird fluttered to the ground and died !  
With trembling wing back to the distant wood  
Swift sped his widowed mate. The wild green hills,  
Her only sympathizers, sent her cries  
Re-echoed from their hardy hearts, while far,  
Through dark ravines and caverns cold, where clung  
The deadly nightshade and the hissing snake,  
The rattling echo of the merciless shot  
Crept, like a murderer, away and hid !

“Ye shall no murder do”—“Thou shalt not kill !”  
Tell us, ye angels who the records keep  
Of right and wrong, the meaning of these words?  
Is not life, life? Are brain and heart-throb, love,  
Ambition, hope, grief's weight and joy's keen thrill,  
Not life in creatures dumb, but life in kings?  
If to take life be not to kill, then why  
To slaughter tyrants is it to murder do?  
Vouchsafe, ye guardians who the secrets hold  
Of heaven and earth in your mysterious hands,  
To once define that undiscovered line  
Where righteous justice ends and crime begins.

What worth was that dead bird to him who drew  
The red blood from its palpitating heart?  
What prize in those gray shattered pinions lay?  
What gain that blood-stained beak which bit the dust  
To him who laid it low? No hungered lips  
Had plead for feathered prey; no famished frame  
Could feed its human life on this foul flesh;  
No victim science claimed like this: the shelves  
Of curious cabinets would but have scorned  
To add to far-found treasures such a thing!  
The very food which gave its homely form  
Fuel to keep alive its vital flame,  
From wormy wood or miry morass plucked,  
Made it a worthless offering to lay  
Upon the dainty shrine of appetite.  
If justice sees in cruelty no crime,  
Then be destruction's wanton heel unbruised!

Why take away with thoughtless stroke the life  
Thou canst not give again? If 'tis thy right  
To kill, 'tis easily done; but though thy hand  
May mountains move and valleys turn to hills,  
Or shackle seas or bridge a universe,  
Thou canst not life bestow upon a worm.  
Though humble be the harmless thing that crawls  
Confiding to thy feet, why crush it out?  
Because its state seems lowly in thy sight  
Or its existence worthless, must it die?  
'Tis not for us to know its mission here.  
The tiniest insect in its cell remote  
Fulfills its purpose in the wondrous chain  
God forged at the creation. Not a heart  
Which beats but has its throbbings linked within

Some other heart, and has, perchance, a home  
As sacred to its wordless loves as shrines  
By man held dear. By thine own altars then,  
By all those ties to thee the tenderest,  
Beware what thou dost render desolate !  
Pause ere thou lay'st a finger on a pulse  
To still its throbs ! Withdraw thy hand in awe  
Lest thou, in killing wantonly, should steal  
Thy Maker's treasures ; for the breath of life  
The hand and seal of God the Father is.

## THE ORGAN-GRINDER.

A WEARY man he sought my door—  
A worn old man, ill-clad and poor—  
Who on his bending shoulders bore  
The means of his subsistence.  
An organ, old and quavering,  
Like him who raised his voice to sing,  
Accordant with the jarring thing  
Which earned him his existence.

An aged man, with locks all white  
As snow on lofty Alpine height,  
And features covered with the blight  
Of time and crushing sadness :  
With feeble steps he came alone,  
And cast his heavy burden down,  
Then begged me, in his flattering tone,  
“ Be gracious in thy gladness.”

I gave him there to drink and eat ;  
Then rising from his lowly seat,  
With heavy foot the time he beat  
And tuned his voice for singing ;

Far through the vacant village street  
His untrained voice rang wild and sweet,  
While every cadence seemed replete  
With memories it was bringing.

For, as he sang, the trickling tears  
Coursed through the wrinkles of his years—  
Heart rain that swept the silent biers  
Of long-departed pleasures ;  
And still he sang with trembling tone  
Of friends he'd loved and joys he'd known,  
There in the twilight dim, alone,  
In soft and mournful measures.

He sang of one sequestered spot  
Across the sea, where stood the cot  
Where first, in childhood's hour, he sought  
A mother's fond caressing ;  
He told how shattered fortunes led  
His steps afar to earn his bread ;  
And as he paused I bent my head  
And craved the old man's blessing.

For age and sorrow and white hair  
Ennobling toil and chastening care,  
The bishop's gown and mitre are  
Upon God's broken-hearted.  
Humbly his benediction fell,  
Then came a faltering farewell,  
Lost in the peals of vesper bell—  
The minstrel had departed.

## TO BABY LILY.

### I.

GO bring me of blossoms the brightest and best,  
Those jewels of Nature that grow on her breast ;  
Bring bird-songs of warblers that flash through the  
groves

Where the first of all lovers repeated their loves ;  
Bring voices of billows in joyous commotion ;  
The purest of pearls from the gem-beds of ocean :  
Bring all that is rarest and fairest to lay  
At the feet of the Lily that blossomed in May.

### II.

Go bring me, of spring-time, her daintiest breath ;  
Imprison the dewdrops that jewel the heath ;  
Go gather ye here from earth's loftiest height,  
Still gilded with star-beams, morn's earliest light ;  
Go bring from eternity's threshold a beam  
Of unquenchable radiance ever to gleam  
On the wandering footsteps, wherever they stray,  
Of Lily, our Lily, that blossomed in May.



## III.

Bring hither some tankard unbought and unsold,  
More shining than silver and purer than gold,  
Whose wave-polished brim no mortal hath tasted,  
Whose contents divine no rude hand hath wasted ;  
Scooped out from some shell of the cavernous deep,  
In the brightest of crystal its rosy rim steep ;  
Let heaven's best beam on the bright waters play,  
And we'll drink to the Lily that blossomed in May.

## IV.

Go bring me bright dreams for an innocent pillow,  
Faith steadfast and strong for life's dangerous billow ;  
Bring trust in the Highest through surges of sorrow ;  
Bring strength for to-day and sweet hope for to-morrow ;  
A vigilant soul, while the tender heart dreams  
By youth's starry meadows and sunshiny streams :  
Bring every best blessing to lovingly lay  
On the brow of our Lily that blossomed in May.

## THE HAUNTED HOUSE.

FANCY.

HARK to those footsteps in the hall,  
That step upon the stair !  
Heard ye that hand against the wall ?  
The shriek that echoed there ?

FACT.

'Twas but the wind that crept between  
The crevices and cracks ;  
The ghost has never yet been seen  
That faced the fire of facts.

FANCY.

Nay, nay ; 'twas not the wind. Behold  
The door-knob slowly turns !  
Perhaps some spirit sad and cold  
For this bright fireside yearns.  
And list ! upon the outer door  
Didst hear that heavy knock ?  
The old house shook from floor to floor  
In answer to the shock.

## FACT.

Nonsense! Imagination's hand  
Alone the latch did lift;  
Reason and sense both laughing stand,  
Such idle whims to sift.  
The knock upon the outer door  
Was some lone cartwheel's jar,  
Or watchman's rattle; nothing more  
Than all such knockings are.

## FANCY.

Tell me not so—night after night,  
Up, up the winding stair,  
With flickering lamp and robe all white,  
And wild, disheveled hair,  
I see a pallid figure wind  
With silent step and slow,  
With withered roses loosely twined  
About her brow of snow.

## FACT.

Some solid supper tells that tale  
Eaten 'twixt twelve and one—  
Some wretched pickle steeped in ale  
Or roastbeef over done.  
These are the spades that dig men's graves—  
Such hands our death-bells ring—  
Oh souls are body's veriest slaves  
Where appetite is king!

## FANCY.

Nay, trust me, 'tis a haunted house  
In which I've come to dwell ;  
No wind, no pickle, mug or mouse  
So dire a tale could tell.  
From cellar damp to garret high,  
All through the night hours lone,  
Strange footsteps fall, strange voices sigh,  
Or sob, or shriek, or groan !

## FACT.

A haunted stomach, mark me well,  
Holds all the ghosts you see :  
'Oysters and wines thrown in pell-mell  
With coffee and with tea.  
Up, down through dim intestinal hall  
Some turkey's leg may stalk,  
And wonder where in distant thrall  
Its lonely mate doth walk.

Some partridge, too, all marred and pale  
May make its wretched way  
Through cabbage and cucumbers stale,  
Which seem inclined to stay.  
And vinegar, well spiced and sour,  
Shudders to stand between  
The milk-punch of the last half hour  
And custard made of cream.

Hence springs your sprite with troubled hair,  
Your demons grim and gray ;

The gibbering ghosts which grin and glare,  
And which no priest can lay.  
Nay, Fancy, prythee do not speak ;  
Thy rein must now be slacked ;  
Thou may'st not lay thy dainty cheek  
'Gainst the rough beard of Fact.

## TO MY SISTER.

MISS me sometimes ! There'll be a vacant place,  
My own sweet sister, where so long I've been ;  
There'll be an empty chair, another face

By thy fond side where I've so oft been seen.  
In the long coming years may memory's chimes  
Ring up kind thoughts of me. Miss me sometimes !

Miss me sometimes ! When mirth and music reign  
Throughout these scenes which I have loved so  
well !

Oh miss me then ! for never here again  
With the clear chorus will my glad voice swell.  
My footsteps then will roam in other climes,  
Far from this cherished spot. Miss me sometimes !

Miss me sometimes, and fondly love me still ;  
My heart, like mountain summit bleak and bare,  
Can bravely front the stormy clouds that chill  
If far beyond the gloom, undimmed and fair,  
I know thy star of love unclouded climbs  
To shine on me as now. Miss me sometimes !

My eager soul has dreamed—ay, madly dreamed—  
Of honors and the glory that fame brings ;  
But it has found life is not what it seemed,  
And honor, fame, unsatisfying things.  
Between the leaves of my young life lie pressed,  
Like withered flowers, the hopes it treasured best.

My aspirations long since died ; this brow  
'Neath Disappointment's bitter sting still smarts ;  
And all the monuments I ask for now  
Are monuments of love in human hearts.  
Oh rear, sweet sister, in thy heart for me  
Something like this to live eternally.

And now farewell ! Oh may our Father's hand  
Brighten thy path with every kindly gift ;  
And angel guardians in the starry land  
From thy fair brow untimely sorrows lift.  
Farewell, farewell ; ah ! sister mine, when chimes  
Memory's vesper, miss me thou wilt sometimes.

## WAITING.

**D**REARILY burns the fire in the grate ;  
The wind is high and the hour is late,  
But, lovingly here I sit and wait  
For a step I long to hear.

The night is cold and the wind is high,  
But the moon is full and round in the sky,  
Lighting the path which my love comes by  
My desolate heart to cheer.

The air is chill and the stars are few,  
On yonder plains of infinite blue,  
While I wait for the lover fond and true  
Who is coming by and by.

Swift clouds are hurrying over the night,  
But what care I for the threatening sight?  
Though the moon be dark, the eye is bright  
Which is coming by and by.

Though thunders roll, upon his breast  
My head shall sink in happy rest,  
Like a birdling's, hid in quiet nest  
From the storm-king's angry eye.



## MY GRANDSIRE'S WATCH.

A TIMEPIECE old, yet worn and weary never,  
It hangs, a relic, by the bed-room door ;  
With ceaseless ticking thus it sayeth ever :

“ Years fourscore and more  
I've told time's steady, steady progress o'er.”

I saw it first when for my childhood's pleasure  
My grandsire held it to my wondering ear,  
And bade me listen while its busy measure  
Said to me pleasantly,

“ Merry, merry hours I'm marking for thee here.”

The good man died ; still the old watch kept ticking,  
And as they hung it by the bedroom door  
I lingered there to hear its ceaseless clicking  
Saying o'er, “ Years fourscore  
Have borne him hence for ever, ever more.”

I listened to it as my own years hastened  
To mingle with the memories of the past,  
And even then my yearning heart was chastened  
To hear it say, “ Hastening away  
Is youth's bright morn whose sunshine cannot last !”

In that same spot, when my full heart was darkened  
By heavy clouds of changeful after-years,  
With stricken soul to its clear voice I hearkened—  
“Hopes and fears, births and biers :  
Such is this life—a scene of smiles and tears.”

And when my best of earthly hopes were scattered,  
And graveyard gloom hid those I held most dear,  
I turned, with all my fondest heart-ties shattered,  
To hear that voice saying, “Rejoice,  
Thine own time cometh—naught is eternal here.”

## UMBRÆ.

### I.

TICK, tick, so the pulse of Time  
In its solemn monotony throbs ;  
And away on the hills with a woe that chills,  
The dying storm-blast sobs and sobs,  
Like the heart of penitent crime.

### II.

The winds rush over the moor  
Like steeds that have never been tamed,  
And through years to-night of mildew and blight,  
Raps, raps at my heart's closed door,  
A love that has never been named.

### III.

I gaze at the starlit sky,  
That bewildering poem of God,  
And my heart keeps time to a sweet old rhyme,  
Learned 'mid the asters and golden-rod  
Of an autumn long gone by.

## IV.

Out of the wreck of my life,  
    Floats up a young face that is fair—  
Young and transgressing and unconfessing :  
    I see it floating, floating there,  
    Amid the billowy strife.

## V.

Life was a dream when we met,  
    Luxurious, balmy and bright ;  
She wandered away ere yet the full day  
    Had taught me man's most ennobling right  
    Is to forgive and forget.

## VI.

I buried her out of sight,  
    'Neath the sods of my passing years ;  
And rolled a stone 'gainst the sepulchre lone,  
    Where, shrouded in manhood's manliest tears,  
    My love lay cold and white.

## VII.

But oft and again as now  
    That love which I never have named  
From the past will come with its young heart dumb,  
    And the red, red lips which never blamed  
    Seem lingering on my brow !

## VIII.

Who looketh not back sometimes  
    Through the valley of vanished years,  
Nor longs for the power, for one short hour,

To efface some step, to dry some tears,  
Some requiems change to chimes?

## IX.

Could I but beckon her back,  
Could she see me owning the shame  
That sent her adrift with no one to lift  
The dust from her tarnished name,  
The stones from her young life's track ;

## X.

Then, then to its life of woe,  
Could I yield my desolate heart,  
And welcome the stroke that another's broke  
When the fiat went forth for us to part  
In that autumn long ago !

## XI.

Shame on my wretched pride,  
Shame on my cowardly soul,  
Which so feared the world it madly hurled  
A woman out on its dangerous shoal,  
Nor knew if she lived or died.

## XII.

Yet gazing on yonder sky,  
That mystical poem of God,  
I seem to behold, through the gates of gold,  
My lost one laying her grievous load  
At the feet of Christ on high.

## GERTRUDE.

GERTRUDE ! A few brief weeks ago, how linked  
With joy this name ! It was in mirthful hours  
A melody—sunshine in clouded moods,  
In saddened hours a prayer. “Gertrude,” we cried,  
And she we loved came flying to our arms  
On friendship’s wings, and laid her hands in ours,  
And gave us smiles and gentle words, and stood  
Beside the weary sufferer’s couch of pain,  
Like some mild star whose gentle radiance beams  
On evening’s cloud.

Her daily deeds were like  
The flowers which children scatter in the path  
Of brides—so pure, so fresh ; and where there grew  
A thorn, she meekly kept it for herself  
And gave the rose away !

As pilgrims seek  
Some consecrated shrine, so came the poor  
To her, and poured their sorrows at her feet—  
With ready hand she ministered to want  
While her young lips did feed the hungry heart,  
And clothe the naked, trembling soul with God’s  
Blest promises.

And little ones—those gems  
Which Jesus scatters from his crown for us  
To gather and replace therein—whose hearts  
Beat so much nearer heaven than our own—  
Lavished their spotless love, as if they saw  
And recognized in her the shining face  
Of one but straying here from Paradise.  
A goodly thing it is to know of one  
That little children loved her.

Alas! for us,  
Death came! Death, the pale sculptor! Pitiless,  
He pressed the lips, and they were ice; he touched  
The brow, and it was marble; laid his hand  
Upon the heart, and it was still for aye.  
The friend we loved, our fairest and our best,  
He saw and chilled into a statue.

“Gertrude!”

No more to us a name! A monument  
Erected in our hearts, it stands for all  
That's purest, brightest, best. Around its base  
Memories cluster like forget-me-nots,  
And love its apex crowns with *immortelles*.  
When we would bring to mind the holy type  
Of life, of beauty, innocence and worth,  
Of noble attributes and lofty aims,  
Of Christian meekness and unswerving faith,  
Of rarest self-forgetfulness and deeds  
Of saint-like goodness,—when we fain would rest  
Our broken hearts on holy ground like this,  
Then, then, we whisper, “Gertrude!”

“YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN.”\*

“NOT forgotten,” “not forgotten!”  
Those words sweep o’er my heart  
With all the sunny brightness  
Which remembrance can impart.  
“Not forgotten!” Oh there’s music  
In those kindly words for me,  
And ever through their sweet refrain  
Float memories of thee.

How pleasantly come back to me  
Hours fled long ago ;  
When eyes were bright and hearts were light,  
And spirits pure as snow ;  
When merry lips trilled merry songs,  
And every heart was gay,  
And you and I went laughingly  
Along youth’s rosy way !

How joyously we feasted Life  
And crowned him merry king,  
When apple trees were full of bloom,  
And the robins welcomed spring !

\* From a friend’s letter.



The blood that made our young hearts beat  
Was then a rushing tide,  
Which every brightness reveled in,  
And every grief defied.

The summer eves were blissful then,  
The summer days were long ;  
The woods seemed full of bluest birds,  
The sunshine full of song.  
“Forgotten !” No, but life has grown  
For both so earnest now,  
And sadder things than flowers are fixed  
Upon each other’s brow !

But here’s to thee ! There still exists  
A bright spring in my heart,  
Which fills a cup of love for thee,  
Dear friend, where’er thou art ;  
And wheresoe’er fate marks thy path,  
By mountain, plain or sea,  
May early joys and early friends  
Still unforgotten be !

ODE TO THE "MOTHER HUBBARD" OF A  
FANCY-DRESS BALL.

MOST quaint and meritorious dame,  
Who bears that fond maternal name  
To childish memory dear,  
Permit a simple quill of goose  
Enthusiastic thoughts to loose,  
And eulogize thee here.

What heart that loves the happy past,  
What eye that backward loves to cast  
A glance to bygone days,  
But Mother Hubbard's title speaks  
With glistening eyes and glowing cheeks,  
And lips that love to praise?

'Mid all the gay and gladsome throng  
Of ladies fair and courtiers strong,  
Within the festive hall.  
Thy quaint and picturesque attire,  
Thy ready wit and soft satire,  
Were winsomest of all.

Though England's proud and haughty queen,  
With kings and princes seldom seen,  
Adorned the motley crowd,  
Each heart forgetful of all these,  
Down upon Memory's bended knees  
To Mother Hubbard bowed.

We wonder not that at thy shrine  
Thy wondrous friend of class canine,  
Long wrecked on storied strand,  
As the dear object of thy love,  
So blest, should quite distracted prove,  
And not know how to stand.

Full many a wight of present day  
To hear thy generous lips but say  
Not every hope was dead,  
Would daily dance a merry jig,  
Don any sort of martial rig,  
Or stand upon his head !

Dear dame ! May thy life's cupboard be  
For ever filled most plenteously  
With every blessing known ;  
And when some knight shall seek to share  
Thy woman's love and woman's care,  
Refuse him not a bone !

## MY BIRTH-DAY.

### I.

A PILGRIM on Time's silent shore,  
I rest my weary feet to-day—  
Look back upon the nevermore,  
The sun which always gilds the yore,  
And sound my harp's lone lay.

### II.

Here at the feet of youthful years  
I strike the half-regretful strings—  
Sound the soft strain which gently clears  
Away the mistiness of tears  
Fond memory ever brings.

### III.

To-days I've known and ceased to know  
Rise fast on my reverted gaze,  
While like retreating armies go  
The hours I never more may know,  
To join my yesterdays.

## IV.

Yet why should I be sad? Behold  
My silky locks are brown as yet;  
No silver shining 'mid their gold,  
No lines upon my forehead scrolled,  
Though Time and I have met;

## V.

Ay, often met before to-day,  
For I Time's tenant am while here;  
And he, before his house of clay,  
Raps regularly for his pay  
On rent-day, once a year.

## VI.

His clear receipt in heavy hand  
Stands traced on every brow that lives;  
All other debts for house or land  
We may with bold affront withstand,  
But Time no credit gives.

## VII.

I paid, to-day, the annual rent,  
But paid it with a bitter sigh;  
'Tis gold I grieve to feel is spent—  
Gold from a gracious Giver sent  
To spendthrifts such as I!

## VIII.

But let my rested feet move on,  
My pilgrimage not yet is o'er;

No more I'll mourn the glories gone,  
But with my new to-morrow's dawn  
Resume my road once more.

## IX.

Dashed from my cheek be every tear,  
Each shadow from my spirit cast ;  
What though upon the Past's gray bier  
The corpse of still another year  
Lies in its shroud at last?

## X.

'Tis but a warning touch of pain  
Upon my careless brow at best—  
A seeming loss, a certain gain—  
One link removed from that long chain  
Which leads to endless rest.

## ACROSTIC.

**A** BREATH, a thought, a cloud that flies  
Perfumed with reveries toward the skies ;  
Rolling in purple mists away  
In paths where man may never stray.

Melting our passions into calm,  
Excelling Gilead's magic balm,  
Here wakes our bliss—here dies our grief—  
A whole existence in a leaf!

Vapor and fragrance, ashes, dust ;  
A joy serene, a dream to trust ;  
Niched in thy fires our visions read,  
A world, a hope, a heaven, a weed !

## THE BOX OF OLD SHOES.

A COBBLER dwelt in an Eastern town,  
And a busy old man was he,  
He worked from morn till the sun went down,  
With his lapstone on his knee.  
Little recked he of the world without—  
Its bustle and bother and din—  
He cared not a fig what folks were about,  
If their “custom” he gathered in.

All the day long his hammer and awl  
And bristled “wax-end” he plied ;  
Nor thought of his neighbors great or small—  
Who was born, who wedded, who died.  
And time wore on with him stitching there  
On “upper” and “siding” well “soled”  
Till his empty pockets no more were bare,  
But jingled with musical gold.

Then a larger shop became his desire,  
And straight did he set about  
To widen the floor and raise the roof higher,  
And move the old rubbish out.



And thus he discovered a box all grim  
With the dust and the dirt of years,  
And he opened it, out in the daylight dim,  
With a pair of shoemaker's shears.

"Gad!" cried he, "here's a box of old shoes,  
Good for nothing at all I s'pose—  
Here's little and big and great and small,  
Old-fashioned and worth not the prick of my awl:  
They're the refuse work of some earlier year,  
All dusty and mouldy; I vow 'tis queer  
That so long in my snug old shop they'd be,  
Unnoticed and wholly forgot by me.

"I'll set them out by the old shop door;  
They'll do for a sign if nothing more;  
It's a pretty good lot to be wasted so,  
But then what better thing can I do?"  
Just here a thought struck the old man's pate:  
With pen and ink he fulfilled it straight,  
And nailed this bill on his box of shoes:  
"Folks who want 'em are welcome to choose."

Well pleased he felt in his heart's kind fount  
That "loss" had thus turned to "good account,"  
And he thought how many a foot now bare  
Could cover its shivering nakedness there;  
And he worked away that whole day long,  
Smiles on his lips or a snatch of song,  
For he felt so many in sorry need  
Could a blessing reap from his humble deed.

But his *friends* came by and read the bill,  
Then into the box turned their greedy eyes,  
And with eager fingers they searched until  
They found for themselves a suitable "size."  
They stamped about with sneer and frown  
To see if they fitted their own feet quite,  
And they swore they did as they laced them down,  
Albeit they were "a trifle too tight."

Then with angered lips they shouted loud :  
"Here's an insult, zounds ! we none will bear ;  
This man's getting rich and waxing proud,  
And thinks his grim old rubbish *we'll* wear !  
They were meant for us sure ! behold how they fit—  
Though perhaps they do a trifle squeeze.  
Odds ! bristles ! his crazy old pate we'll split  
For daring to offer us cast-offs like these !"

Then relatives came who heard he was rich—  
They never had known him in Poverty's door—  
And thought they'd look in now to see him stitch,  
And perhaps catch a drop as his fortunes ran o'er.  
But they caught the cry his friends had raised,  
And tall and short and fat and slim,  
Each vowed a "size" he was "sore amazed,"  
To find in that box expressly for him.

Then, arming themselves with a goodly load  
From the labeled box outside the door,  
They into the cobbler's premises strode,  
Where, singing, he hammered his lap-stone o'er.

As up he rose, surprised at the crowd  
Of kindred and friends in his presence meek,  
They knocked him down, and vehemently vowed  
Not an impudent word would they let him speak.

In vain he strove in his wild despair  
T' explain the "case" in the way it stood ;  
But they banged and beat him, and all did swear  
Not a word should he say, they'd be shod if he  
should.

So with merciless blows was he overthrown—  
The blood from his body did slowly ooze,  
And he gave up the ghost with a mouldy moan,  
Falling dead 'neath his lot of dusty shoes.

Thus the kind intent of a generous heart  
Was turned to ill in that angry mood,  
And the shoemaker's body beaten apart  
By the very weapons he wielded for good.  
How oft, as I roam this wide world o'er  
And note the paths that people choose,  
My thoughts go back to that box by the door,  
And the innocent cobbler's lot of shoes !

When I see fair words which innocent lips  
Let fall in the lightness of guileless hearts—  
Pure as the sweet the honey-bee sips  
From the rose's depths ere its bloom departs—  
When these words are torn by the vulture beaks  
Which Purity's beauty loves to bruise,  
I'm certain their arrogant venom seeks  
A "size" for itself in the box of shoes.

When some thoughtless jest from a lip of mirth  
Cast lightly forth—a breath on the air—  
Is seized by the shoe-fitters here on earth,  
And rendered foul where 'twas meant most fair—  
When a careless glance from a gay pair of eyes  
Is caught up as something on which to muse,  
'Tis plain the defamer is seeking a “size”  
For himself in the box of ready-made shoes.

If a tale by some dreamy romancer be writ,  
Each character chosen out of the brain,  
And the shoe-fitters pull it to pieces to fit  
Their personal attributes into its vein,  
I turn me away then thoughtful and lone,  
On the ludicrous folly of such to muse,  
And feel there's a “fit,” or they'd not put it on,  
In the innocent cobbler's old box of shoes.

## WILLIE'S WIFE.

### I.

**W**ILLIE'S wife has come amang us—  
Willie's wife is young :  
Sure her heart can never wrang us  
Wi' sae sweet a tongue.

### II.

Willie's wife has een that sparkle  
Like a starry night :  
Surely anger canna darkle  
Een that shine sae bright !

### III.

Willie's wife has lips as smilin'  
As the sun at morn ;  
Ah ! the heart maun be beguillin'  
Where such smiles are born.

### IV.

Een sae bright an' lips sae pleasant  
Are as sweet as spring ;  
Be her future like her present—  
Sic a bonny thing !

## V.

Mony folk that ken her tell us  
Luvely is her life :  
Certain sumthin' gude befell us  
When Will chose a wife !

## VI.

Surely cauldness s'all na stay us—  
Gudely maun she be ;  
Ways that won our Willie frae us  
Maun be fair to see.

## THE MURDERER.

OUT, out into the night he speeds away,  
His guilty heart beating the reveillé  
Which breaks for ever in his stricken breast  
The slumbers of remorse. The stars, to which  
He has been wont to lift a loving gaze,  
He fain would hide from now, and the soft winds,  
Whose gentle fingers once caressed his brow,  
He shrinks from as from whispering demons who  
His damning secret now would fain betray  
To all the world. The murmur of a brook,  
A rustling leaf, the twitter of a bird,  
Cause him to start and tremble, and the dews  
Of mortal dread to wet his fevered brow

Nature, through guilt of his, seems guilty grown ;  
Her holiest smile seems, in his sin-veiled sight,  
The hollow mask which hides Suspicion's face.  
In every shadow he a pursuer sees,  
In each sunbeam a dagger for his heart ;  
The passing breeze seems laden with his name,  
Each bird-song freighted with a passing knell ;  
The rose seems tinted with his crime's red hue,  
His victim's pallor each pale lily wears.

He hates the light which may betray himself,  
The darkness dreads which may conceal his foes.  
Upon the ramparts of his life pale Fear,  
A sleepless sentry, walks, while grim Distrust  
Doubts even Fear, and so keeps double watch.

Hunted like some wild beast from place to place,  
For ever hiding and yet never hid,  
Nameless, without a home, without an hour  
Unhaunted by the spectre of his sin ;  
Fearing to sleep and dreading to awake,  
Afraid of God, yet more afraid of man ;  
Hungered and thirsting amid Plenty's feast,  
Stealing with bated breath through thorny ways  
When pleasant paths invite his bleeding feet ;  
Shunned by the good and hated by the bad—  
His days creep on like some long funeral train,  
A fearful corpse for ever in their midst.

Off from his manly shoulders he has dropt  
His manhood, like a cloak which did conceal  
His hideous deformity of soul.  
No more may he stand forth among mankind  
A man. The world has branded him accursed !  
He knows no solitude ; for him, alas !  
The gloomiest loneliness is peopled most ;  
In the dread midnight, when all others sleep,  
Silence shrieks murder in his startled ear !  
And when the Sabbath pours its holy balm  
Upon the bowed head of a Christian world,  
He, on the rack, in Thought's hot dungeon bound,  
Writhes in his agony, while Conscience stands



As Grand Inquisitor, searing his soul  
With the hot irons of remembered guilt.

He dreams sometimes of childhood's happy days—  
A father's smile, a mother's loving kiss ;  
Then starts and feels that he has laid  
A bloody hand on Memory's white shoulder !  
Sometimes he kneels and clasps his crimsoned palms,  
And feels his dumb heart wrestling with its crime,  
Yet dares not breathe one prayer to that just God  
Whom he has sinned against. His weary feet  
Shall rest no more. He must take up his cross—  
The cross of his great sin—and bear it on :  
His guilt is with him always. Not a depth  
So deep but it shall find him out ; no height  
So high, save Christ's forgiving arms,  
But it shall track him there and smite him still.

No more his brow shall know Affliction's kiss,  
No more his red hand feel a friend's fond clasp.  
His lips shall thirst in vain to drink of love  
From hearts which trusted in him, and which broke  
When he betrayed. His ears shall long to hear  
Loved voices whose dear tones for him are hushed.  
His heart shall ache with wounds which know no cure,  
His anguished eyes weep for the blessed sight  
Of faces he shall look upon no more.  
For him there is a place by no man's hearth,  
A shelter for his head 'neath no man's roof ;  
No sinless woman on his breast shall lie,  
Around his knee no happy children sport.  
They who beneath the shadow of his life  
Shall dare to rest, its upas blight must bear.

He lives and yet is dead ; for lo ! his days  
Which the Lord God did give him in the land  
Are desolate. They lie like some fair field  
Across whose harvest the consuming fire has swept,  
And left destruction in its scathing track.  
With none to love, too vile to be beloved,  
A wretched wanderer upon the earth,  
Like Ishmael of old his hand is raised  
'Gainst every man, and each man's hand 'gainst him.

## WE TWA.

SIDE by side sit John and I,  
Twa autumn leaves thegither,  
And ilka blast that shakes the ane  
Is cruel to the ither.  
The wind about our door is cauld,  
Life's fires are burned to embers;  
The only sun that shines for us  
Is burly, bleak November's.

The years now left us crutches are,  
On which we totter slowly  
Toward that rest that's ready for  
The lofty and the lowly.  
But as we hobble side by side,  
An' gang our gait sae cheerly,  
We baith find time to whisper yet,  
"We lo'e ane 'ither dearly."

An' mony a canty hour we pass,  
Our early days recallin',  
When all Life's roses buddin' were,  
Whose petals now are fallin'.

In memory's shade we sit us down,  
Youth in our hearts sits singin',  
An' John ance mair a bridegroom is—  
My wedding bells are ringin'.

An' thus upon our brows the bleeze  
Of ither years to woo us,  
We hold ane 'ither's hand and think  
How gude God has been to us;  
How He has kept our hearts sae true,  
And held the sunshine o'er us,  
An' taught us when he sent a cloud  
He knew what best was for us.

We mind how little faces gleamed,  
An' little hands caressed us,  
Lang syne, when in our sturdy youth  
Our gracious Father blessed us.  
We mind us how we buried them  
Wi' grief an'tears at even;  
We hid the root on earth—the bloom  
The angels culled in heaven.

We thought our hearts lo'ed weel before  
To ane anither plighted,  
But they were never twins we found  
Till grief had them united.  
Joy's fading archway may be bright  
For light hearts to pass under,  
But mutual sorrows weave the ties  
Which this warl' canna' sunder.

So, jogging onward step by step,  
Though Life's young fires are embers,  
We find there's warmth sufficient left  
To thaw our iced Novembers.  
For lo'e can warm an' lo'e can cheer  
And lo'e can ope the portal,  
Now locked by Life's auld rusty key,  
Which leads to bliss immortal.

## WOMAN'S WORK.

DARNING little stockings  
For restless little feet,  
Washing little faces  
To keep them clean and sweet,  
Hearing Bible lessons,  
Teaching catechism,  
Praying for salvation  
From heresy and schism—  
Woman's work !

Sewing on the buttons,  
Overseeing rations,  
Soothing with a kind word  
Others' lamentations.  
Guiding clumsy Bridgets  
And coaxing sullen cooks,  
Entertaining company  
And reading recent books—  
Woman's work !

Burying out of sight  
Her own unhealing smarts,  
Letting in the sunshine  
On other clouded hearts ;

Binding up the wounded  
And healing of the sick,  
Bravely marching onward  
Through dangers dark and thick—  
Woman's work !

Leading little children  
And blessing manhood's years,  
Showing to the sinful  
How God's forgiveness cheers ;  
Scattering sweet roses  
Along another's path,  
Smiling by the wayside,  
Content with what she hath—  
Woman's work !

Letting fall her own tears  
Where only God can see,  
Wiping off another's  
With tender sympathy ;  
Learning by experience,  
Teaching by example,  
Yearning for the gateway,  
Golden, pearly, ample—  
Woman's work !

Lastly cometh silence,  
A day of deep repose—  
Her locks smoothly braided  
Upon her breast a rose ;  
Lashes resting gently  
Upon the marble cheek,  
A look of blessed peace  
Upon the forehead meek !

Pale hands softly folded,  
The kindly pulses still ;  
The lips know no smiling,  
The noble heart no thrill :  
Her couch needs no smoothing,  
She craveth for no care ;  
Love's tenderest entreaty  
Wakes no responses there.

Fresh grave in the valley—  
Tears, bitter sobs, regret ;  
One more solemn lesson  
That life may not forget.  
Face for ever hidden,  
Race for ever run—  
“Dust to dust,” a voice saith,  
And woman's work is done.



## THE MARCH SNOW-STORM.

'TWAS but yesterday morn,  
When, with banner all torn,  
The old warrior, Winter, received his congé ;  
And sounding the rally  
O'er hill-top and valley,  
He gathered his forces from slow water-courses,  
From meadow and mountain and frozen-up fountain ;  
Then shut in his breath  
'Twixt his icy old teeth,  
And grumblingly sauntered away,  
He did ;  
Grumbled and sauntered away.

Then down the dale dancing,  
And up the glen glancing,  
Came light-footed Spring and kissed the bleak wold—  
Glanced up in surprise  
At the cloud-covered skies,  
Waved her sweet-scented hand o'er the frost-laden land ;  
Then merrily rallied the crocuses pallid,  
That sullen and rigid  
Lay frozen and frigid ;  
And she shivered to find it so cold  
In her realm—  
Shivered and burst into tears !

Then back on his path,  
With demon-like wrath,  
Whirled wary old Winter, and scattered her train.  
With ice-pointed lances  
He froze up her glances ;  
Then mounting his forces on icicle horses,  
On his icy-cold brow placed his pale crown of snow,  
And defied vanquished Spring  
To o'erthrow the ice-king—  
Defied her, and frigidly mounted again  
His throne—  
His icy and frosty old throne.

And Spring, timid creature,  
With fear in each feature,  
Her sceptre resigned to the sturdy old king ;  
Then fled in dismay  
From valleys away,  
Sending wails of despair on the frost-bitten air ;  
While, with snow on the hills and ice in the rills,  
His army in mail  
Guarding every dale,  
Winter looks over his shoulder at Spring,  
And laughs—  
Laughs at the victory won.

## DESERTED.

### I.

SHE was a young wife once,  
Full of trust,  
Believing love's virgin gold  
Could not rust.

### II.

She knelt her at Christ's feet,  
Young and strong,  
And made her vows, and dreamed  
Not of wrong.

### III.

Her footsteps fell on flowers,  
And her eyes  
Saw only rosy paths,  
Sunny skies.

### IV.

Ah ! how one kind voice blessed  
The sweet air !  
How fondly one kind hand  
Stroked her hair !

## V.

Does any dare to say  
Clouds will rise?  
Her trusting, wifely smile  
Doubt defies.

## VI.

Can clouds bedim such faith,  
Such fond trust?  
Never, till death shall lay  
Dust to dust.

## VII.

Years pass—she is not yet  
An old wife,  
But time has stolen the sweets  
From her life.

## VIII.

No roses for her now ;  
Only snow  
Lies cold wherever flowers  
Used to grow—

## IX.

Pale snow that drifts and drifts,  
Day by day,  
Through hollows of her heart,  
Nor melts away.

## X.

Her trustful, sweet young life  
Thus has died ;  
Nailed to Love's cruel cross,  
Crucified.

TO GUY.

AS rivers which their sources find  
In mountain summits parted wide,  
Yet meet at last and find the sea  
In one commingled common tide—

So we, of different birth and blood,  
Strangers for years our course did run,  
Till Fate the parted pulses found,  
And swept the swift tides into one !

## DO ANGELS WEEP?

UP from the earth can worldly woes arise,  
Piercing the starry canopy above,  
To wound the spotless souls of Paradise,  
And wring stern sorrow from those hearts of love?  
Oh tell me, spirit watchers of my sleep!  
In yon fair heaven do the angels weep?

Say, can those pearl-winged messengers of peace  
Bend their bright brows o'er sorrow's shaded hearth;  
Bring to the bruised heart its blest release,  
And mingle heavenly tears with tears of earth?  
Tell me, O ye who saintly vigils keep  
With mortal mourners! do the angels weep?

Comes there swift rushing from its spirit-home  
Some beaming seraph for each child of sin,  
Wooing the restless, troubled heart to come  
And fold itself her cleansing wing within?  
Say, ye who heaven's golden harvest reap!  
O'er earthly errors do the angels weep?

How vast a truth, for mortals here to know

That they who sound the heavenly harps can mourn !

That for each sin the human heart doth sow

A tear-drop in some seraph's breast is born !

Oh what temptation o'er the soul could sweep,

Nerving the heart to make an angel weep ?

I

## INGEMISCO.

### I.

THE dying day  
    Wrapped in its sunset banners lay  
Fading, fading :  
There, wordless both, we watched it going,  
With coldness on our two hearts snowing,  
And silence out of silence growing,  
    Shading, shading  
All our lives with its chill flowing.  
    Parted for ever,  
    We stood together  
Among the hills of purple heather.

### II.

There, side by side,  
We saw the sweet day when it died  
    Sadly, sadly.  
We heard the songs of twilight birds,  
The tinkling bells of twilight herds,  
All things save one another's words,  
    Gladly, gladly—  
Softening our aching heart's discords.



Parted for ever,  
We walked together  
Among the purple blooming heather.

## III.

We heard the hum  
Of evening's hidden minstrels come  
Creeping, creeping  
From hill-top, tree-top, shore and stream,  
As if e'en silence found a theme  
In evening's loveliness supreme !  
Weeping, weeping :  
Our souls awaked from life's best dream !  
Parted for ever,  
We passed together  
Across the blooming waves of heather.

## IV.

Our hearts were numb,  
Our passionate lips were stricken dumb—  
Throbbing, throbbing ;  
Our burning pulses shook their tears  
Across the unforgotten years  
Of tender hopes and slumbering fears.  
Robbing, robbing  
Life of all that life endears—  
Parted for ever,  
We crossed together  
The scented shadows of the heather.

## V.

One swift look cast—  
One mute appeal—the last, the last !  
Parted, parted,  
Two hands which ne'er shall clasp again,  
Two hearts that breaking hide their pain—  
Pride stabbed our love and it was slain !  
Frozen-hearted,  
Two God-bound lives world-rent in twain !  
Parted for ever,  
No more together  
We cross the fragrant seas of heather !

## THE OLD WILLOW TREE.

**I**T waves in its loftiness close by the door  
Where my little lips lisped their accents of yore,  
Where my young brother played—and a mother's hand  
bound

The wreath on the forehead that loved to be crowned ;  
It stands in its pride by the moss-verdured well  
Where the rainbow-hued water-drops musically fell,  
While the accents of childhood's dispassionate glee  
Rang up through the leaves of the old willow tree.

It spreads its broad branches far, far o'er the spot  
Which saw us assembled, each eve, in our cot,  
Where the eyes of affection devotedly met,  
And kind words were spoken I ne'er can forget.  
'Neath its sheltering arms, in the soft summer air,  
Rose softly and sweetly our voices in prayer,  
And hushed as a breeze o'er a calm summer sea  
Rose our words through the leaves of the old willow  
tree.

It saw my sweet sister go forth in her pride ;  
Her beautiful cheek bore the blush of a bride ;

Her eyes flashed with pleasure, her rosy lips smiled  
As a mother's fond blessing there hallowed her  
child ;

It saw that lip sadden, that eye drop a tear,  
As the parting from home and its loved ones drew  
near ;

But the birds and the branches with voices of glee  
Filled with music the leaves of the old willow tree.

It saw my brave brother become a proud man,  
Of loftiest purpose and resolute plan ;  
It saw him launch forth on the waves of the world,  
Like a stem from the parent tree ruthlessly hurled ;  
It saw him borne back, all his high hopes at rest,  
With the pulseless young heart that lay cold in his  
breast ;

O God ! his last parting was spoken to me  
'Neath the listening leaves of the old willow tree.

I next left the spot with my brow overcast,  
And the joys of my childhood for ever gone past ;  
I had learned there to know that this world cannot  
give

Those pleasures for which we all labor and live :  
With quivering lips thence I wandered away—  
Lips too mournful to smile, too despairing to pray ;  
But I bore in my bosom far o'er the blue sea  
Some dew-laden leaves from the old willow tree.

Long years have gone by since I last bade adieu  
'Neath its shade to the fond friends my young spirit  
knew—

Years sweeping their changes across the hearthstone,  
Where my father and mother now linger alone.  
How warm was their blessing, how thick were their  
tears,  
As I clung to them fondly the last time for years !  
Oh I feel in my soul they are waiting for me  
'Neath the whispering leaves of the old willow tree !

## Z U R A .

**Z**URA, from her casement leaning,  
Hears the song of mocking-bird,  
Sees the laurel and laburnum

By the sweet south breezes stirred—  
Sees the rose and pallid lily

Drop their faces from her view,  
Half abashed and half emboldened,  
Dainty tipplers drunk with dew.

Zura shakes her dusky tresses

Backward from her forehead white,  
And with parted lips she drinketh  
Of the glory of the night—

Revels in its waste of verdure,  
In its prodigal perfume ;

While the royal-hearted Southland  
Holds its carnival of bloom.

Zura sees the moon of midnight

O'er her airy ocean ride,  
As some ship that drags her anchor  
And goes drifting with the tide—

Here and there a silent meteor  
On its secret mission flies,  
Flaunting its mysterious pennon—  
Blockade-runner of the skies.

Zura hears a footstep falling  
On the blossom-scented sod,  
And her heart throws kisses softly,  
Shyly where that foot hath trod.  
Hark ! the tender notes of minstrel  
With the blossoms interlace,  
And her Creole blood goes bounding  
In swift blushes to her face.

“To the starry high seas, maiden,  
Lift the glory of thine eyes ;  
There they’ll find in all that’s brightest  
Than themselves no brighter prize ;  
See the red rose where its petals  
Night’s narcotic goblet sips ;  
Were its crimson hues and sweetness  
Borrowed from thy sweeter lips?

“See the fair Wisteria casting  
Purple pennons to the breeze—  
Round about thy casement climbing—  
Tell me, maiden, what it sees.  
Does it kiss thy young cheek, Zura ?  
Does it look thee in the eye ?  
Does it see thy bosom heaving ?  
Ah ! most enviable spy !

“ Birds of spring, in grove of orange  
Nests have built amid the bloom ;  
Caskets holding treasure hidden  
In a palace of perfume.  
Scented orchards drip their sweetness  
On the violet's royal bed  
Of veined gold and princely purple—  
Stars eternal overhead.

“ In the maze of bloom the zephyrs  
Whisper they have lost their way—  
Of her own exceeding sweetness,  
Night herself must faint away.  
Buds and bloom and dewy blossoms,  
Light of moon and spreading grove,  
Ray of star and wing of zephyr,  
Whisper, dearest, but of love—

“ Love such as I bear thee, Zura :  
Answer me with smile or sigh,  
Wilt give love for love, my darling ?”  
Softly came the answer, “ Fie !”  
Sang again the pleading minstrel :  
“ Maiden, trifle not with love ;  
'Tis the signet-ring of heaven  
Dropped from angel hands above.

“ Fly with me, O Zura ! maiden,  
Thine shall be earth's brightest bowers,  
And the universe shall know no  
Fairer resting-place than ours.



In the ever-blooming Tropics  
We will find our paradise—  
Thine in my supreme devotion ;  
Mine, dear love, in thy sweet eyes.

“Round the feet of Time, the tyrant,  
Rosy shackles shall be hung—  
That we hear him not in passing,  
And remain for ever young.  
Birds uncaged in bowers of beauty  
Shall to music set each day ;  
Wilt thou come, my own, my Zura ?”  
Coyly came the answer, “Nay.”

“Falsehood, then,” the minstrel mutters,  
“Fills the earth and fills the skies,  
Turns Hymettian sweets to poison,  
Lurketh in a maiden’s eyes ;  
Makes her honeyed lip taste bitter,  
Sours the sweetness of her cheek,  
Chokes within its treacherous fingers  
Joys that would her bosom seek.

“Robs the rose of all its beauty,  
In the orange blossom hides !”  
Came a whisper drifting toward him :  
“Orange blossoms are for brides !”  
Swift a new hope, like an arrow,  
Shot across the minstrel’s brain—  
And with trembling lip he gathered  
Up his broken song again ;

And again the tuneful measure  
Floated far and floated free,  
Mingling its impassioned cadence  
With love's sweet hyperbole :  
"I will steep my song in dewdrops  
Till it win thee to my side—  
I will braid the midnight moonbeams,  
Zura, sweet, to crown thee bride.

"I will wrap thy fair existence  
In the mantle of my life—  
Proudly guard its precious pulses  
With the sacred watchword—wife ;  
With the heart-beats in my bosom  
For thy feet I'll pave the way—  
Wilt thou bless me, Zura, maiden?"  
Gently came the answer, "Yea!"

Then a light form from the casement  
In the moonlight bendeth low ;  
Orange blossoms, dew and roses !  
What new secret do ye know ?  
Heart of maid and heart of minstrel  
Joy triumphant sentinels—  
Over all the stars are hanging—  
Beautiful betrothal-bells.

## A R E V E R I E .

THE Past ! How mournfully its tides return  
And break on memory's melancholy shore ;  
Quenching the watchfires of the soul, which burn,  
Kindled by cherished flowers whose bloom is o'er.  
Each wave that dashes 'gainst the aching heart  
Tells of some withered hope, some joy that's crushed,  
Some silent song whose echoes ne'er depart,  
Some voice we dearly loved for ever hushed !

How fraught with change, with sorrow and decay,  
Come back the pictures of departed years !  
How many graves obstruct Thought's loving way !  
How hearts have changed—how smiles have turned  
to tears !

And all succeeding days which gently rest,  
As tide-worn pebbles, on Time's fading shore,  
Wear their impressions sadly in the breast,  
Which yearns for pleasures that return no more.

Love, that we deemed enduring in its strength,  
Falters when most we wish it to be strong,  
And hearts we thought unchanging change at length,  
And cease to love where they have loved so long.

Thus are our spirits taught to turn from earth,  
From wounded love and coldly-severed ties,  
To seek that peace which wins its blessed birth  
In the unsullied land beyond the skies!

## THE BANDIT'S BURIAL.

FROM THE GERMAN OF FREILIGRATH.

ON bloody bier extended  
A corpse lay cold and wan ;  
The heavy burden, slowly,  
Six stalwart men bore on—  
Six men all bronzed and bearded,  
Well armed with steel and lead,  
Through odorous pine forests  
Bore on their silent dead.

Two brightly-polished muskets,  
With barrels round and clear,  
Crossed by three stout rapiers,  
Composed this forest bier.  
Upon their blades the bandit,  
Once fiercest in the fray,  
With ghastly head thrown backward,  
Now bruised and bleeding lay.

Upon his pulseless temples  
A gaping wound lay red,  
Where on its fatal mission  
The deadly bullet sped :

Across his frowning forehead  
Fast flowed the stiffening gore,  
While mountain breezes fanned the face  
They could refresh no more.

His bloodshot eye was glassy  
His cheek's brown hue had flown,  
And to the livid lips in death  
His scornful smile had grown.  
The blade, once bold in combat,  
The right hand tightly held  
With grasp that would not loosen  
When conquering foeman felled.

O'er stones and tangled mosses  
From his last battle-field,  
The brigand drew unheeded  
The sword he'd scorned to yield;  
And down its blade so shining  
A bloody streamlet ran,  
As though the very weapon  
Wept for the murdered man.

His left hand, cold and stiffened,  
His silken girdle held  
In grasp that clutched it sternly  
When death his pulses quelled.  
Gold lace and tinsel loosely  
Waved his slashed doublet o'er,  
And in his belt the dagger  
That would be drawn no more.

So lay the pallid warrior  
    Beneath the gloomy pines,  
While comrades bore him sadly  
    Through the dark Apennines.  
Calm on his bier of weapons  
    He slept 'neath heaven's blue vault,  
Till in the forest's deepest depths  
    Their leader bade them halt.

In solemn mountain fastness  
    Down the rude bier was laid,  
And sabre bright and musket  
    Now serve for pick and spade.  
They shut him in no coffin,  
    Lost, lonely, loveless, dead ;  
Shrouded in blood and armor,  
    He seeks his dreamless bed.

The funeral rites are over,  
    The grave swells black and bare ;  
The little troop turn silently  
    And leave him sleeping there.  
They load their trusty muskets—  
    Hark to that whistle shrill !  
In secret mountain coverts  
    They have vanished—all is still !

## THE LION'S RIDE.

FROM THE GERMAN OF FREILIGRATH.

### I.

THE desert king, the lion, comes to roam his  
kingdom o'er ;  
Above him wave the rustling leaves of lofty sycamore,  
As, winding near the dark lagoon, he crouches in the  
cane,  
And waits to see the tall giraffe come there to drink  
again.

### II.

'Tis evening, when the Hottentot his lowly village  
lights,  
When sunset signals gleam no more upon the mountain  
heights,  
When the benighted Caffre dreary jungle hurries  
through,  
When in the wood and by the stream sleep antelope  
and gnu—



## III.

Comes now with step majestic o'er the desert the  
giraffe,  
And in the still lagoon kneels down its waters thick to  
quaff;  
With eager eye and outstretched neck she seeks the  
muddy pool,  
And lowly bends her burning mouth and parching  
tongue to cool.

## IV.

The rushes part! with fearful roar the lion upward  
springs;  
Close to that bowed and gentle neck with deadly grip  
he clings.  
What a steed and what a rider! what superb caparison!  
Did royal state or stable ever claim a rarer one?

## V.

Up leaps the doomed giraffe with wild, reverberating  
cry,  
And forth upon the silent plain speeds in her agony;  
All down the splendid housings drops a deep ensan-  
guined stain,  
And the charger's breast is curtained by the rider's  
yellow mane!

## VI.

She beats the moonlit pathway with her swiftly-flying  
feet,  
Her glaring eyeballs vainly strained some kindly aid to  
meet;

Thick o'er the brown-flecked saddle-cloth the heated  
foam doth start,  
And the hushed desert listens to the charger's beating  
heart.

## VII.

Like some weird ghost that panting steed glides o'er  
the sandy sea ;  
Spread on the wind the rider's banner floateth royally ;  
Behind the flying phantom whirls a golden cloud of  
sand,  
Like the pillared cloud which guided Israel to the  
Promised Land.

## VIII.

Comes on their track the whirring vulture, croaking  
through the air ;  
That foul profaner of the grave, the hyena, is there ;  
The robber of the herdsman's flocks, the panther, joins  
the train,  
And the royal rider leads them all across the bloody  
plain.

## IX.

Firmer upon his tottering throne the monarch plants his  
feet,  
And with his claws the cushion rends which forms his  
princely seat :  
Her restless rider onward still the poor giraffe must bear,  
Though dimmer grow her glaring eyes, and faint her  
gasps are.

## X.

On the desert's lonely verge at last the foaming steed  
doth reel—

She dies, and lo ! the courser now becomes the rider's  
meal.

Far over Madagascar gleams the gray dawn of the east,  
And once again is ended here the lion's nightly feast.

## ELODIE.

### I.

I KNEW somebody, long ago,  
Ere life grew sad and time grew slow—  
I will tell you whom, if you list to me,  
And forgive if I weep for Elodie.

She was a rose without a thorn,  
A blush on the blooming cheek of morn,  
A dimple upon life's sunniest stream,  
A bliss, a breath, a beautiful dream.

Under the autumn's nut-brown branches,  
Under the leafy avalanches,  
Blushing, brightening, laughing, swaying,  
Ever going, yet ever staying,  
There I met her, loved her, wooed her,  
Idolizingly pursued her,  
Laid my lavish love before her,  
Hung the bridal chaplet o'er her!

### II.

Life was a double joy to me,  
Wrapped in love's holy mystery.

In a new-made channel the current swept,  
 With a new-born power my pulses leapt ;  
 Two eyes of blue were the heaven I sought ;  
 Beyond those sapphire gates there was naught :  
 In life's sweet dawn love chained me there,  
 But the fetters were golden he made me wear.

Like shaken sunshine swung her tresses,  
 Hiding the arms that gave caresses ;  
 A drift with sunset red upon it  
 Her brow was when my kiss fell on it.  
 She was a picture half enchanted,  
 A temple by some angel haunted ;  
 I would not confess her all divine :  
 She was holily human—she was mine !

III.

Mine, did I say? I called her so  
 In loving lunacy long ago :  
 In earth below or heaven above  
 Was there aught so strong as my strong love?  
 My arm that shielded, my heart that shrined,  
 My soul round that fragile flowret twined ;  
 Could they not shelter and save and shield,  
 Do all—do everything but yield?

I heard not Death's cold tapping finger,  
 Bidding my love no longer linger ;  
 For me, in my mad idolatry,  
 Life had no limit, heaven no decree.  
 I never remembered my rose might fade,  
 I dreamed such blossoms never decayed ;  
 Till her sweet lips smiled, and said, "We sever,"  
 Till her fond blue eyes were closed for ever !

## IV.

Under the swinging, swaying willow  
They made her icy, icy pillow !  
I, like a tombstone, bending o'er,  
Wretched that I went not before,  
Record her death, her name, her age  
Upon my heart's embittered page,  
And see the tear-wet sod grow green  
My life's one love and me between !

Yet God, who took my idol hence,  
Gave, in his grand omnipotence,  
Belief to fill the empty niche—  
Thus he impoverished to enrich.  
Calmly I wait Death's certain hand  
To ope the gates of the holy land,  
Where, purified, my soul shall see  
In heaven my angel, Elodie.

## SONG.

COME, haste thee home ; the lamp is trimmed,  
An anxious heart is throbbing there,  
And loving eyes, with tear-drops dimmed,  
Are gazing on thy empty chair.

Oh haste thee home ; a tender smile  
Shall chase the care-look from thy brow,  
While love and joy the time beguile  
Which passes there so slowly now.

The fire burns brightly on the hearth,  
The cricket chirps its monotone,  
And one who loves thee best of earth  
Awaits thee there, and waits alone.

While red the flickering fire-flames glow,  
The watcher notes her shadow fall,  
And waits the absent one to throw  
One more beside it on the wall !

She watches by the cottage door,  
She lingers by the garden gate,  
And speaks thy dear name o'er and o'er,  
Like some lone bird that calls its mate.

Then haste thee home ; the lamp is trimmed,  
A loving heart is throbbing there,  
And gentle eyes, with tear-drops dimmed,  
Are gazing on thy empty chair.



## BY THE FIRE.

MEMORY sits in my heart to-night,  
Like a lone saint telling her holy beads  
In the dim cloisters of long ago ;  
She opens the book of the past and reads.

She turns the leaves of my lonely life,  
And my years in a slow and solemn procession  
Go steadily by, like a train of monks  
That pass on their evening way to confession.

There are young years whose summery skies  
Lift their arches blue o'er a life serene :  
No sorrowful willow woven among  
The beautiful bay trees' hopeful green.

And years of darkening change march there,  
Which bear no trace of life's early sweet,  
And cowlèd years which join in the train  
With lowered brows and unwilling feet.

And all these years have their friends and foes  
As pensive Memory's guests to-night :  
She raises her calm blue eyes and smiles  
As with noiseless step they come in sight.

And thou art there, O tenderest dream  
That ever my lifetime came to share !  
Sweet as the smile on an infant's lip—  
Exalting, earnest and pure as prayer.

We seem once more to sit side by side  
Down by the warm hearth's mellow light,  
And the old love-links we deemed so strong  
Seem just as strong as ever to-night !

What does the cold world know of the storm  
Which drove us helpless far out to sea,  
Where the turbulent billows rose like hills  
For ever and aye 'twixt you and me ?

It may read of wrecks and storm-swept decks,  
And of white sails sadly driven asunder,  
But little it knows of the joys or woes  
Which the merciless billows have swept under.

Through every change and every care  
My heart to that early dream has clung.  
But I know that the sweetest psalmody  
Of all my changeful life has been sung.

I shall hear life's matin-peals no more  
Across the flowery meadows rolling ;  
Just over the lonesome twilight hills  
I hear the vesper-bells all tolling.

And I stand to-night by the gloomy rocks  
Of a solemn and ever-echoing shore,  
Calling in vain for the glance and smile  
Which have vanished, alas ! for evermore.

But I hear thy voice on the other side,  
And I know the hour mine soon will be  
When Death shall divide the Red Sea of Time,  
And my ransomed spirit cross over to thee.

## INSCRIPTION FOR A TOMB.

**H**ERE have we gathered, with a reverent hand,  
The sacred shackles that a while detained  
An angel from the paths of Paradise.  
Death saw and struck the mortal fetters off,  
And gave rejoicing heaven back its own.

## MARY MOORE.

I KNEW thee when thy girlish years were few,  
Mary Moore ;  
When the bloomy blush upon thy cheek was new,  
Mary Moore ;  
When the blossoms in thy hair  
Than thy brow were not more fair—  
Sweeter not what thrushes sung  
Than the language of thy tongue,  
Mary Moore.

Thy scarlet lip was winning in its smile,  
Mary Moore ;  
The dimple on thy young cheek was a wile,  
Mary Moore ;  
And thy song was like the note  
In the linnet's joyous throat,  
When it greets the morning's rays  
With its psalmody of praise,  
Mary Moore.

Side by side, through the orchard's drifting bloom,  
Mary Moore ;  
Hand in hand, drenched in dewy spring's perfume,  
Mary Moore ;

Heart with heart by shelly beach,  
Trusting silence for our speech—  
Dreaming youth and gentle maid,  
In those sunny days we strayed,  
Mary Moore.

While the bob-o'-link shook his merry bells,  
Mary Moore ;  
In the meadows and the cool mossy dells,  
Mary Moore ;  
Ere the summer-time had flown,  
Change thy gentle heart had known,  
And thou bad'st me, "Go, forget!"  
What we both remember yet,  
Mary Moore !

Where the bloom hung the fruit is on the bough,  
Mary Moore ;  
The tender blade has harvests rip'ning now,  
Mary Moore ;  
But the thrushes sing no more  
Where they sweetly sang of yore,  
And my heart has learned to live  
Without the love thou couldst not give,  
Mary Moore !

## MIRABELLE.

### I.

SHE lay on a crimson sofa,  
And the sheen of her golden hair  
Hung down in unbraided beauty  
Over shoulders as snow-flakes fair.  
A cloud on the pensive forehead  
And a lift of the arching brow—  
The tremor of some emotion  
Flitting over the red lips now.

### II.

Two letters beside her lying—  
One bearing a nobleman's crest ;  
The other without emblazon,  
Save a tremulous heart's request.  
The first a coronet offered  
And " position whilst thou dost live ;"  
The next, " a true heart's devotion  
Is, darling, all I can give."

### III.

" Wealth ! 'tis a marvelous sceptre  
In womanly keeping," she mused,  
And thought of a coronet gleaming  
On her glorious locks unloosed.

“Gold ! ’tis a talisman mighty,  
And a setting for beauty rare ;”  
Then smiled in the polished mirror  
At herself, exceedingly fair.

## IV.

“The nobleman writes me kindly,  
With the pride of his lofty race,  
And in courtly language praises  
My ‘radiant beauty and grace.’  
The rare temptation of riches  
He has skillfully round me thrown,  
But I remember while reading  
That his years are double my own ;

## V.

“And I note my noble suitor,  
In essaying my heart to move,  
Uses but the force of money,  
And never the lever of love.  
But Guy here writes to me only  
Of a love that has grown with life ;  
And, urging his strong affection,  
Sayeth, ‘Mirabelle, be my wife.’

## VI.

“Gold ! it hath wonderful power  
To soften the bitterest lot ;  
But could it extract the poison  
From a marriage where love is not ?



Pride whispers, 'To be a fine lady  
Is well in Ambition's eyes'—  
'To be a true woman is nobler,'  
My womanly heart replies."

## VII.

Again she lifted the letters,  
There comparing them each with each—  
The pompous parade of riches  
With a poor man's tender speech.  
"For one I should shine," she whispered,  
"A queen in the wary world's eyes—  
But a beggared heart I'd carry  
Hidden under the grand disguise!

## VIII.

"And I must wear, for the other,  
Cold poverty's scantiest gown,  
But my heart, in his fond keeping,  
Would wear Love's rosiest crown.  
Ah me!" said the lady sighing,  
"Would that heart ever feel regret  
That for true love's flowery chaplet  
I rejected a coronet?

## IX.

"When my cheek bears no more roses,  
And my forehead knows youth's decline,  
Shall I mourn these proffered treasures  
And this title which might be mine?

Could I sit down in Guy's cottage,  
With a tear on my faded face  
That in the Duke's passing carriage  
I owned no luxurious place?

## X.

"Nay! my heart makes ready answer  
To the question, bitter and cold;  
Wealth is Life's fanciful gilding,  
But true love is its solid gold.  
The honor of honest labor,  
The escutcheon of industry,  
And the crown of spotless virtue,  
Mark the real nobility.

## XI.

"Thank God that it is not money  
And titles and title-deeds  
That can satisfy the craving  
Of a woman's noblest needs!  
Here is my Lord Duke's answer,  
And let him not deem it rash"—  
Then she watched the waxen taper  
Burn the nobleman's words to ash.

## XII.

Then she wrote with a glad impatience:  
"Dear Guy, I am not one to mock  
A true heart's sincere petition  
With the idleness of mere talk.  
With faith in your noble nature,  
Sweet trust in your love—it is well:  
Through life, until death, I answer,  
I am thine alone—MIRABELLE."

## LITTLE MAY BALLARD.

FOLD the white hands softly o'er the pure bosom,  
Clasp in her fingers earth's loveliest flowers :  
Angels in Paradise wait to unloose them  
And scatter their fragrance through heavenly bowers.  
Upward and downward, through regions of space,  
Heralds of light hover over the clay,  
Touching the forehead and kissing the face,  
Calling, "Child-angel, come with us away."

Seal the sweet eyes and fold back the fair tresses,  
Spirits, like hers, linger not here below ;  
Angels but lent her from angel-caresses  
To teach us the loveliness Heaven doth know.  
See ye not radiant faces of love ?  
Hear ye no rustle of seraphic wings ?  
Feel ye no scintillant glory to prove  
Mystical presence of heavenly things ?

Hush thy wild sobs, O disconsolate mourner !  
Thy little one slumbers—sweet, sweet is her rest ;  
Angels of tenderness far hence have borne her—  
The arms of "Our Father" thy babe have caressed.

Upward, still upward—on, on to the skies,  
Winging their flight from the prison of clay,  
Past the gates of the dawn and the realms of sunrise  
The child and the angels have flitted away.

## LIZZIE.

DO I remember Lizzie? Oh yes!  
She was the pride of the place;  
No one looked in her eyes but to bless  
Her bright and beautiful face.

I never saw a forehead so white,  
Such a purely womanly brow:  
Let's see! if I remember aright,  
That was thirty years ago.

Her hair was as dark as forest gloom  
When the sun's about to set,  
With here and there through the dusky bloom  
A sunbeam shimmering yet.

And her cheeks were like crushed carnations,  
With lilies laid close beside,  
Or a wave's paly palpitations  
With sunrise upon the tide.

Her lips were like sanctified portals  
Whence holy church music pours;  
And her smiles, like evangelized mortals,  
Came out of their crimson doors.

“Would I know her now?” Art thou hinting?  
To affection what is Time  
But an artist softly retinting  
Pictures already sublime?

Know Lizzie? Yes! anywhere straying,  
Walking in triumph or tears;  
My heart has been kneeling and praying  
To her image all these years—

Bound there by memories unblighted,  
And love that could never die,  
Though her fate was never united,  
Thank Heaven! with such as I.

I never beside her long tarried,  
And never once kissed her brow;  
No doubt she long ago married,  
And wholly forgets me now;

For mine was that worship unspoken  
Which burneth on unrevealed.  
I knew, though my heart should be broken,  
’Twere better for both concealed.

I know that my forehead is wrinkled,  
My bosom becrossed with care,  
And time has unsparingly sprinkled  
His hoarfrost over my hair.

But, then, what of that? Not a wrinkle  
Furrows my heart to-day,  
For Lizzie’s white hand seems to sprinkle  
Youth on its roots alway.

The sunset of life is serener  
Than the glowing flush of its dawn ;  
And Memory goes out like a gleaner  
In the fields of the golden gone.

And she lies like a dreamy sleeper  
'Mongst the harvests swept away  
By Time, that relentless reaper,  
To the world of Yesterday

In her bygone girlish glory  
My Lizzie she loves to hold :  
There she lives like the song or story  
Which, though aged, never grows old.

Like a star she rose on my lifetime ;  
I worship that starlight yet,  
Though the rays of her womanly wife-time  
Some other bosom has met.

What ! say you she never has wedded ?  
Strange is that story, if true ;  
Why the days of her life seemed threaded  
With love-links for ever new.

Lovers, like sentinels, wandered  
Along her beautiful life ;  
Was all that fidelity squandered,  
And Lizzie never a wife ?

You say that her hair is whitened,  
And her life one long regret ;  
That her days go by unbrightened,  
And her heart cannot forget.

Pray, what in her sweet existence  
Could give her a moment's pain?  
What heart ever showed resistance  
To aught she desired to gain?

Nay! say not yon form is Lizzie;  
Ah! trifle not thus again;  
My brain grows easily dizzy,  
And my heart is prone to pain.

Still, do you say she is near me?  
Her face! Ah! how can you dare!  
Do you mean yon pale woman—hear me—  
With her crown of silver hair?

With that brow so sad and shrunken,  
That eye with its faded fires,  
That cheek so pallid and sunken,  
That lip where all joy expires?

You rave! I turn from your picture;  
Your Lizzie like that may seem,  
But mine is unbound by the stricture  
Of any such fearful dream.

Mine lives in the land immortal  
Of manhood's undying truth,  
And love is the pearly portal  
Of the fount of eternal youth!



## LOVE LINES.

O H tell me not that future years  
Will bring a shadow to my brow,  
That time will turn my smiles to tears,  
And change the heart that loves thee now.  
As fly the years more closely still  
Clings to the oak the pendent vine ;  
As time rolls by, so, dear one, will  
My heart cling closer unto thine.

Talk not of wealth's alluring power ;  
What are its gems and gold to me?  
I'd give them all for one sweet hour  
Of calm, unbroken bliss with thee.  
Ah ! dearest one, the humble hearth  
Where love and truth contented live  
Lendeth a brightness to the earth  
Which wealth can never, never give.

Then take me to thy faithful breast,  
And let thy heart my haven be ;  
Where I may safely sink to rest,  
From life's rude tempests fondly free.

Thus, heart to heart and hand in hand,  
We'll smiling greet life's shadowed even,  
Whose fading light reveals the land  
Where Love creates eternal heaven.

## TO SOME FALSE HAIR.

**H**ERE is a tress of hair like mine,  
So like in texture and in hue  
'Twould seem, as here its threads I twine,  
Beneath no other sun or vine,  
Upon no other head than mine,  
It grew.

Yet know I not upon what brow  
The glossy locks first shining hung ;  
Whether 'twas pure as drifted snow,  
Whether 'twas sad or dark or low,  
Whether 'twas old and worn with woe,  
Or young.

What thoughts filled up the busy brain  
Beneath this soft, uncurling hair,  
Were they of greed and golden gain,  
Ambition, avarice or pain?  
Teemed they with burning hopes or vain  
Despair?

How throbbed the heart? Did love alone  
Hold undisturbed dominion there?  
Or was that heart his tottering throne,  
With pride and peace and glory flown,  
Its royal colors thickly strewn  
With care?

Is it some woman's radiant hair,  
The former pride of some proud head?  
Has age shot silver arrows where  
The sister tresses shimmering are?  
Has Beauty scorned the change to share  
And fled?

Or has the former owner died?  
What pangs or pleasures felt she last?  
The pressure of some true heart tried,  
Some haunting thoughts of fate defied,  
Or turned she to some love denied  
Long past?

O relic of some life gone by,  
Or of some bosom beating yet!  
Were voice but thine how might I sigh  
O'er some heart's hallowed history—  
Some long life's mournful mystery—  
Regret!

Cold world of fashion, false and vain,  
How much in thy deceit we trust!  
Forgetful that thy glittering train,  
Like this fair tress must, grain by grain,  
Be scattered and resolved again  
To dust.

## THE LITTLE FIDDLER'S SONG.

I FIDDLE for breakfast, I fiddle for dinner,  
I fiddle for saint and I fiddle for sinner ;  
From morning till night my little bare feet  
Go cheerily roaming from street to street ;  
I pocket the pennies and pocket the dimes,  
And I crook my elbow to suit the times,  
With my squeak ! squeak ! do ! re ! mi ! fa !

I fiddle for maid and I fiddle for master,  
Where faces are fairest I fiddle the faster ;  
Where money is spent or where money is made,  
I'm often rebuffed, but oftener paid ;  
I play for the poor and I play for the proud,  
And I pass my cap to the kind-hearted crowd,  
With my squeak ! squeak ! do ! re ! mi ! fa !

Few know the joy that a vagabond feels,  
With a fiddle to play and a dog at his heels ;  
A-roaming from palace to cottager's door,  
Amusing the rich and delighting the poor,  
Content to sleep anywhere when it comes night,  
A peaceful conscience making "all right,"  
With my squeak ! squeak ! do ! re ! mi ! fa !

The world owes a living to Rover and me ;  
We cheerfully take it, whatever it be,  
Eating our dinner in quiet, alone—  
I taking the meat, he taking the bone ;  
Then, taking the road when 'tis time that we jog,  
Together we tramp it—myself and my dog,  
With our squeak ! squeak ! do ! re ! mi ! fa !

I travel by land and I travel by sea,  
So careless and happy and healthy and free :  
With a crust in my pocket and peace in my heart,  
I'm ready to rest or I'm ready to start ;  
Gayly I wander 'twixt palace and hut,  
Merrily scraping the jolly cat-gut,  
With its squeak ! squeak ! do ! re ! mi ! fa !

Where wild blows the wind and where frost fills the air,  
Where rivers are icy and mountains are bare ;  
In climes where the orange and jasmine in bloom  
Load the wandering breeze with the sweetest perfume—  
Right tired, sometimes, but disconsolate never,  
I trustingly swear by my fiddle for ever,  
With its squeak ! squeak ! do ! re ! mi ! fa !

I haven't a sorrow, I haven't a care,  
Though naked my feet and though rugged my fare ;  
And as for my clothes being ragged or small,  
Why Adam and Eve had just no clothes at all ;  
So, sure that I'm much better off than were they,  
I fiddle and fiddle and fiddle away,  
With my squeak ! squeak ! do ! re ! mi ! fa !

I fiddle to-day and I fiddle to-morrow,  
I fiddle for joy and I fiddle for sorrow ;  
In the North, in the South, in the East, in the West,  
Wherever my fiddle will pay me the best ;  
A musical elbow I find is the thing  
To Poverty rob of her bitterest sting,  
    With its squeak ! squeak ! do ! re ! mi ! fa !

I fiddle for breakfast, I fiddle for dinner,  
I fiddle for saint and I fiddle for sinner ;  
From morning till night, with my little bare feet,  
I cheerily wander from street to street ;  
I pocket the pennies and pocket the dimes,  
Shaking my elbow to suit the times,  
    With my squeak ! squeak ! do ! re ! mi ! fa !

M

TO A FLOWER FROM GERTRUDE'S TOMB.

A ROSE, a pure, white rose, so sweet, so fair,  
One well might deem thy spirit hidden there,  
Its flight to heaven staying yet a while  
Some loving mourner's sorrow to beguile.  
I kiss the flower—its petals, half unfurled,  
So like thy heart—"unspotted from the world,"  
Its gentle fragrance, delicate and pure—  
So like thy guileless spirit's portraiture.  
'Twas gathered from thy grave—this little rose—  
Where its main stem such lavish verdure throws ;  
The cold, forbidding features of the tomb  
Lie hidden in its sweet embrace of bloom,  
As if the vine had caught the tender grace  
Thy smile once had, to cheer a gloomy place.



## AFTER THE WAR.

OVER the stony street, clamp, clamp, clamp !  
Ride the cavalrymen from the camp ;  
With carbines slung and sabres bright,  
Home they ride from foray and fight,  
Grimed with their battles lost and won,  
Husband, lover, father and son  
Riding home.

Tramp, tramp through the dusty street  
Rings the sound of returning feet ;  
Through the valleys and over the hills,  
The throb, throb of their marching thrills.  
With folded banners and sullen drums,  
Rank and file the regiment comes  
Marching home.

Heavily fall the hoofs of the horses,  
Clattering home with the cavalrymen ;  
Steadily tramp the feet of the forces,  
Marching home from the wars again,  
Muskets silent and sabres sheathed,  
Peace on the gleaming steel has breathed,  
God be praised !

Alas ! for desolate hearts and homes  
Where the long-awaited never comes !  
Where the hearth is swept and fire kept bright  
For eyes that never will see its light—  
Where affection waits, and waits in vain,  
For the step that never will come again  
                                    From the war !

## LINES

ON THE DEATH OF JAMES E. VAN STEENBURG, OF  
FISHKILL VILLAGE, DUCHESS Co., N. Y.

AND thou art gone ! Gone as the brave oak goes  
When, lightning-riven, it falls in all its strength ;  
Gone like a star struck from its shining sphere,  
With all its brilliant radiance undimmed ;  
Gone, like a sun that's set, with all the gold  
And purple of a noble life well spent,  
Making thy couch of death irradiate.  
Thine absence doth a starless twilight leave  
In hearts that loved thee, yet is it illumed  
By the rich glow the memory of thy days—  
So rightly lived, so calmly yielded up—  
Paints in warm, glowing, glorious tints  
Along the dark horizon of regret.

The dew was yet upon thy leaves of life ;  
Time, in his fiery thirst, had not yet sapped  
The morning freshness from thy manly pulse,  
The summer sunshine from thy generous heart  
Thy feet yet rested 'mid the rosy bloom,  
The noonday light and warmth and crystal truth

Of grand existence, and the curdling clouds  
Of wintry age had not, as yet, obscured  
One star in the fair zenith of thy days.  
The royal gold of faithful friendship filled  
The coffers of thy life, yet thou didst die!—

Die, while Love clung to thee and prayed aloud  
In direst agony that thou wouldst live.  
Die, while True Friendship, self-forgetful, stood  
And watched with smited heart thy failing pulse.  
Die, while Affection's meek resistance fought  
The one foe stronger than are all our friends!  
Ay! while we wept Death offered thee his hand,  
And thou didst take it fearlessly, like one  
Who only sees in him the trusty guide  
Who waits to lead us through Life's final gates  
Into the better country just beyond.

Droop, O ye village elms! beneath whose shade  
So long and peacefully his heart did beat—  
Droop low and sadly for that heart is still!  
Turn ye your morning dew to tears and shed  
Them tenderly in memory of him  
Who shall to your green arches come no more.  
Your leaves will fall in autumn, but his feet  
Will never rustle their crisp depths again;  
Your branches will put forth their buds in spring  
And birds will build there, but his loving eye  
Shall look upon your buds and birds no more.  
Droop low, ye village elms, his sacred dust  
Has passed beneath your archway to that couch  
Whose lonely pillow he shall never leave!

Ye mountain peaks, bid ye the passing clouds  
To crape your summits with their pale gray mists.  
Death has put out the eyes that loved ye well,  
And hushed the voice that joyed to speak your praise.  
A note is stolen from the lofty scale  
Of human harmony ; and all the sweet  
Resounding echoes climbing up your heights  
Must miss one from among their cheerful choir.

Cease, cease to toll, ye village church-bells, cease !  
Our hearts are turned to funeral-bells, and toll  
For one who is not ; and the aisles of thought,  
Where Memory, a pale-faced mourner kneels,  
Ring with the echoes of departed feet,  
Which, save in dreams, will walk our ways no more :  
But Faith, consoling Faith, points from the tomb  
Toward the far, eternal valleys, where  
The angels sow the fields of night with stars,  
And bids us staunch our wounds with the sweet hope  
That soul to soul we there may meet again  
Him whom Our Father, in His wisdom, called  
From earth to be with Him in paradise.

## LINES TO A BOUQUET.

SWEET gift! to thee, on friendship's altar cast,  
My heart kneels down, o'erflowing with emotion,  
For thou hast brought me pictures of a past  
Which memory worships with a strange devotion.

Thou bringest visions of a distant hearth,  
A far-off roof-tree and a rushing river—  
A meadow which gave golden cowslips birth,  
A brook whose song was "ever and for ever."

I seem to see a well-remembered face,  
I seem to listen to familiar voices,  
I wander in a well-remembered place ;  
In days of old the new to-day rejoices.

I feel a well-known pressure on my hand,  
And on my yielding lip and cheek another ;  
On childhood's sunny threshold do I stand  
And gaze into the sweet eyes of my mother.

Long-faded sunsets glow again for me,  
Again are gentle hands my locks caressing ;  
I kneel once more beside a father's knee,  
And bow my forehead to his tender blessing.

Fair phantom fingers lead me down the vale  
Where sleep for ever those my heart hath cherished,  
And Memory's ghostly feet glide cold and pale  
Among the frozen flowers of summers perished.

The grave, behold ! gives back its early dead,  
The past yields up its Herculaneum treasure ;  
Long-silent lips, dipped in Life's rosy red,  
Sigh, sing, sob, laugh again, in pain or pleasure.

Along my path lie scattered tearful smiles—  
Scattered and buried in the sad "No more"—  
Which now a blossom's simple breath beguiles  
To rise from the white camps of "Gone before."

## NEVER COMPLAIN.

### I.

NEVER complain ; why should you bare  
To the world your heart?  
For your red wounds what does it care,  
However they smart?  
Why burden its gales  
With your woes and wails?  
Hush them and crush them—  
Never complain !

### II.

What though your best aims for success  
Seem wasted labor?  
And what though Fate seems but to bless  
Your richer neighbor?  
Learn to endure it,  
Can complaint cure it?  
Your share bravely bear—  
Never complain !



## III.

Because your path is drear and dark,  
Must you shadow mine?  
Because I sail a leaky bark,  
Shall I founder thine?  
Nay! trim your own sails  
To weather Life's gales;  
Quail not and fail not—  
Never complain!

## IV.

Craven! to make another's ears  
Sewers to drain your life  
Of all its refuse sighs and tears,  
Ills and petty strife!  
'Tis a beggar's due,  
This "I pity you!"  
Disgracing, debasing—  
Never complain!

## V.

Why will ye to the weakness yield  
Of base repining?  
'Tis cowardice—best kept concealed,  
This senseless whining.  
Why lend to Malice  
Your heart's best chalice?  
She'll drain it and stain it—  
Never complain!

## VI.

What though hope's golden harvest be  
Mingled with tares?  
What though in joys attained you see  
But thickening cares?  
Bear your own load,  
Nor another goad  
With thongs of your wrongs—  
Never complain!

## VII.

Less sins than fretting are called crime  
In this world of pelf:  
Be strong, be still; 'tis strength sublime  
That conquereth self.  
What though your heart ache—  
What though your heart break!  
Wear it and bear it—  
Never complain!

## VIII.

Whate'er the sorrow you endure,  
You can find a worse—  
Some deeper wound more hard to cure,  
Some bitterer curse.  
In comforting others—  
Friends, sisters, brothers—  
Find relief for your grief—  
Never complain!

## IX.

A day will come when all the pain  
Will be requited—  
When clouded skies will clear again,  
And wrongs be righted.  
Smother your sighs, man !  
Stifle your cries, man !  
Moan not and groan not—  
Never complain !

## EBB AND FLOW.

THE morn is on the march, her banner flies  
In blue and golden glory o'er the skies ;  
The songs of wakening birds are on the breeze,  
The stir of fragrant zephyrs in the trees.  
Waves leap, full freighted, to the sunny shore,  
Their scrolls of snow and azure written o'er  
With hope and joy and youth and pleasure new,  
While surges fast the sands with jewels strew—  
The tide is in !

The stars shine down upon a lonely shore,  
The crested billows sparkle there no more.  
Poor bits of wreck and tangled seaweed lie  
With empty shells beneath the silent sky.  
Along the shore are perished friendships spread,  
In Hope's exhausted arms lies Pleasure dead ;  
A life lies stranded on the wreck-strewn beach,  
The ebbing waves beyond its feeble reach—  
The tide is out !

## THE OLD CLOCK IN THE CORNER.

I MIND me of two pleasant things  
My childhood loved to know,  
And smile on them as memory brings  
The scenes of "long ago."  
I see them now, as down the past  
Mute Fancy's footsteps fall—  
An old clock in the corner dim,  
A shadow on the wall.

The clock was old and dull with years ;  
Its dial scarred and wan,  
For it had marked the smiles and tears  
Of generations gone.  
With timid eyes I used to watch  
Its figure, dark and tall,  
And 'twas my mother's shadow fell  
Beside it on the wall.

For ever there at eventide,  
That form so slight and fair,  
The old clock ticking at her side,  
And roses in her hair !

And there I saw the stars look down  
And pallid moonbeams fall  
Round the old clock in the corner lone—  
The shadow on the wall.

How oft, when nestled to her breast,  
I've heard her whispered prayer  
That by the gracious Saviour blest  
Might be her darling there.  
And when I waked in those dear arms,  
My dreamy eyes would fall  
On the old clock in the corner dark—  
Her shadow on the wall.

The spring-time came, the robins sung,  
The gladiolus bloomed,  
The wild rose by the roadside hung,  
And all the air perfumed.  
And still I saw my mother's smile  
Illume the ancient hall,  
The old clock ticking at her side—  
Her shadow on the wall.

Alas! there came a time when lone  
My heart grew evermore;  
I found that I had leaned upon  
A shadow—nothing more.  
Still ticking was the grim old clock  
Out in the lonely hall,  
But gone for aye the form that cast  
The shadow on the wall.

For far away in shadow-land  
Where bloom the bright and blest,  
The loved one with an angel band  
Found her abiding rest.  
I learned, as I wept beside the clock  
Alone in the gloomy hall,  
How precious to the heart may be  
A shadow on the wall.

And love, I learned, is not a breath  
Which time doth wipe away ;  
Though Life's a blossom kissed by death,  
Then left to slow decay.  
And Time, the ceaseless monitor,  
Is the old clock in the hall,  
And treasures which we cherish most  
But shadows on the wall.

## THE ODD FELLOW'S FUNERAL.

'TWAS almost sunset, and alone I wandered  
Among the mansions of the dreamless dead ;  
Pensive and sad, on other scenes I pondered—  
On loved ones lost, on joys for ever fled.

The withering breath of autumn, faint and low,  
Came sadly sighing past each quiet tomb,  
While shadows, gathering upon evening's brow,  
Added their darkness to the deepening gloom.

Softly upon the gentle air of even  
Stole to mine ear lone notes of music sweet,  
So distant that they seemed to glide from heaven  
Into my sad soul's innermost retreat.

It seemed as if some angel-band were here  
Chanting soft requiems above the dead ;  
While one lone star hung like a pitying tear  
Above each slumberer's couch, by twilight shed.

Near and more near the mystic music drew ;  
I heard the throbbing of a funeral drum :  
Another silent dweller then, I knew,  
Approached this pale-doored city of the dumb.



Then came the mourners with their measured marches,  
Their shrouded banner and the solemn bier,  
Bringing, beneath the evening's starry arches,  
A brother to lie down for ever here.

Upon the coffin his regalia lay,  
Where roses freshly gathered shed perfume  
Sweet as sweet life upon the white array  
Of halls all echoless and gates all gloom.

A branch of evergreen from each kind hand,  
To symbolize belief in life immortal  
And joy eternal in the eternal land,  
Dropped tenderly upon the tomb's cold portal.

Ashes to ashes, dust be unto dust !  
The clinking trowel finishes the tale :  
The spirit soars where neither moth nor rust  
Corrupts, nor friendships fade, nor griefs assail.

'Tis o'er ! The solemn ritual is said,  
The funeral cortège vanishes in gloom,  
But I still linger by the buried dead  
And shed my tears upon a stranger's tomb.

In tropic climes had been his early home :  
Ah ! do his dear ones wait his coming there ?  
There do they pray for him when night hath come  
Nor know their darling is beyond their prayer ?

While these sad thoughts arise, my memory brings  
Her own great griefs and opens them anew ;  
For eyes must weep and sorrow plant her stings,  
Albeit God is good and Heaven is true.

Sorrows there are that never find repose,  
Griefs that the wounded heart can ne'er forget,  
Deep graves within our lives that never close,  
Great suns of bitterness that never set.

I had a brother once ; long since he died :  
Far from the scenes of childhood's sunny bloom  
He wooed illusive Fame to be his bride—  
He found a deathbed and a stranger's tomb !

Kind brothers laid him in his early grave,  
And soothed his dying hour with gentle care ;  
God's blessing on that brotherhood I crave,  
And for them breathe a sister's grateful prayer.

## MY PUPILS.

I HAVE two pupils, young and strong,  
Restless and roving all day long ;  
Bent, half the time, o'er dry old books,  
And half upon their own good looks.

Some years ago a Father's care  
Sent them my study hours to share—  
Two wandering truants, full of sins,  
A pair of tantalizing twins.

Yet they're not wicked, only wild ;  
But what a charge for such a child  
As I was when at first I sought  
To teach them as they should be taught !

Try as I may their ways to lead,  
I find they're leading me instead ;  
And, often puzzled what to do,  
I'm thankful that there are but two.

In vain, whenever comes the night  
I shut them both in prisons tight ;  
In vain, when comes the merry morn,  
I ope the doors and sagely warn ;

They gravely wink at what I say ;  
Then, self-reliant, go their way,  
As full of mirth, as free from pride,  
As though they ne'er had heard me chide.

Loads of advice the good world brings  
To keep these youths in leading-strings ;  
But they, the saucy things, declare  
Precept is cheap, example rare !

They split upon all sorts of rocks,  
Give goodly folk all sorts of shocks ;  
Find earnest Christians out of church,  
And leave long sermons in the lurch.

They go where I forbid them to,  
View scenes they're told they should not view ;  
Trust where most men suspicion feel—  
Where fewest pray they with me kneel.

They take the Bible for their priest,  
And like it best explained the least ;  
If I must shoulder all their sins,  
I wonder where the list begins.

Yet some good things do they behold—  
These pupils whom I'm prone to scold—  
And with them both I vision view  
Which pardon wins for ills they do.

They see, in guilt's distracted face,  
Still signs of a redeeming grace ;  
And where a brother falls, they say,  
“ Oh lift and help him on his way ! ”

Real poverty, disguised in gold,  
In Luxury's lap they oft behold,  
While truest wealth and noblest worth  
In rags and ruin walk the earth.

In fallen woman's blasted fame  
They see not unrepentant shame ;  
They glance the broken heart within—  
Own hers the shame, but man's the sin.

No breast so black they cannot see  
Therein some spot of purity ;  
And little seeds of faith sublime  
They've found in hearts of calloused crime.

Where Justice flings its stern decrees  
They Pity see on bended knees,  
Saying, " Many a sin, world unforgiven,  
Its pardon findeth up in heaven."

And thus, however I may preach,  
My pupils still their teacher teach :  
May He who gave them to my care  
Chide not that they no better are !

## LUTHER LANE.

WITHIN a tottering tenement,  
Upon a patch of ground  
Where breeze and bloom are never blent  
Nor ray of sunlight found—  
A spot which beauty ever shuns,  
Where gloomy shadows reign—  
Dwells one of Nature's honest sons,  
Whose name is Luther Lane.

No tree nor floweret decks the place,  
No signs of woman's care,  
No smiles upon the old man's face,  
No children by his chair :  
The robin there ne'er rests its wing,  
No cricket chirps its strain,  
No blossoms blush, no birdlings sing,  
For lonely Luther Lane.

So quiet this remote retreat,  
It seems the home of death :  
One hears the heart of silence beat,  
While Nature holds her breath.

Like shivered spears or broken blades  
On blighted battle-plain,  
The grasses droop, the daisy fades,  
Where dwelleth Luther Lane.

In weariness and dreariness  
Unvaried pass his days,  
No friendly lips to blame or bless,  
No voice to plead or praise.  
Unheeded shine the stars on high,  
Unheeded falls the rain ;  
'Tis all the same, whatever sky  
Bends over Luther Lane.

Believe me, 'twas not always so :  
That bent brow once was bold ;  
'Twould be less shrunken now, I trow,  
Were not the heart so cold.  
Once, ne'er a lighter footstep fell,  
Once, ne'er a blither swain—  
Triumphant was the village belle  
Who danced with Luther Lane.

'Twas then—in those forgotten years  
When but to breathe was bliss,  
And Luther thought the “vale of tears”  
Was any world but this—  
He met a maid whose merry eyes  
Could flatter and could feign,  
And she, with mingled smiles and sighs,  
Bewitched poor Luther Lane.

Each Sabbath eve, in simple garb,  
With pulses bounding high,  
His bosom bleeding with the barb  
Which Cupid loves to fly,  
Bearing Love's electricity  
In every throbbing vein,  
With fluttering felicity  
Wooded loving Luther Lane !

Poor Luther ever had been taught  
That naught was made in vain ;  
A woman's promises, he thought,  
Included were, 'tis plain.  
So, trustingly, he knelt before  
The girl he hoped to gain,  
Who vowed that she, a twelvemonth o'er,  
Would wed with Luther Lane.

Now there are hearts, like gypsy's palm,  
Which, e'er the fate is told  
That makes another's blight or balm,  
Must first be crossed with gold ;  
So Luther's ladye-love declared  
The two must two remain  
Till Fortune had her favors shared  
With worthy Luther Lane.

\* \* \* \* \*

A lonely man in lonely mine,  
He labored far away :  
What sun as bright as Hope can shine,  
Or make a shorter day ?



A year rolled by, another passed—  
He hastened home again  
His love to greet ; for rich at last  
Was hopeful Luther Lane.

He sought her far and sought her wide,  
And found her but to know  
She bore another's seal of pride  
Upon her fickle brow.  
She curled her haughty lip in scorn,  
And met with cold disdain  
The broken heart, the look forlorn,  
Of jilted Luther Lane.

Cursed be thy greed of gold !" he cried ;  
" My heart for trusting thee ;  
Where woman's breast can avarice hide,  
Cursed may she ever be !  
The hearthstone of my life is cold ;  
Ne'er can it glow again,  
Its chill shall yet thine own enfold—  
Remember Luther Lane !"

From all he'd known and loved before  
He turned to this lone spot—  
A shell upon a silent shore,  
By every one forgot.  
No outward indications show  
His bosom's dreary pain ;  
But life is one long, bitter woe  
For crazy Luther Lane.

## CHILDE SIBYL.

SHE flies before me down the garden path,  
Smiles when I frown, defies my potent wrath ;  
Pelts me with roses when I would rebuke,  
Returns my sternest glance with saucy look ;  
On tip-toe stands behind my elbow chair  
And hides her white hands in my grizzled hair,  
Then drops her bright head down upon my shoulder :  
Ah ! were I younger or were she but older !—

What then ?

She gives me greeting with her rosy lips,  
Wafts graceful farewells from her finger tips ;  
Along my sober path presumes to dance,  
And through her curls darts back her merry glance ;  
Then flies, and flying bids me follow after,  
Hides from my sight, allures me with her laughter ;  
I find her, swing her to my stalwart shoulder :  
Ah ! were I younger or were she but older !—

What then ?

Around my neck her dimpled arms she throws,  
Turns pirouettes upon her pretty toes,

Nestles in mine her soft, bewitching hands,  
While she confides her childish plots and plans,  
And if I find some trifle done amiss,  
She "hushes up" reproaches with a kiss!  
How can I find it in my heart to scold her?  
Ah! were I younger or were she but older!—  
What then?

Oft when I think some sweet caress is missed,  
My unexpecting brow is slyly kissed,  
Or in feigned sleep if her fair head be pressed  
In momentary quiet on my breast,  
And unto hers my swarthy lip be neared,  
She starts and veils her bright face with my beard;  
Were she more timid or were I but bolder,  
Were I but younger or if she were older!—  
What then?

She loves all nature—she is Nature's child,  
So brightly pure, so purely undefiled!  
I watch her flitting in the fragrant gloom,  
The fairest flower where all is flowery bloom;  
And from my heart springs up a prayer to bless  
With all that's loveliest her loveliness.  
I call, she comes—to my broad breast I fold her:  
Ah! were I younger or were she but older!—  
What then?

Up from my knee, to-day, her face she lifts  
While through the oriel window softly drifts  
Sunlight, which rests upon her golden hair,  
Like the soft blessing of a silent prayer.

I lay my trembling hands upon her brow,  
Ah ! dare I wake her from her child-life now ?  
Close, closer to my yearning heart I hold her :  
Nay, were I younger or were she but older !—  
Then ! Then !

## THE TOY.

### I.

**M**Y cousin Flora has found a new toy  
With which she trifles to-day,  
As a child with the coral and bells disports,  
Which to-morrow it throws away.

### II.

And why do we bitterly watch her game?  
Why do we painfully start?  
As she idly toys with the throbbing thing—  
'Tis only a human heart.

### III.

Only a heart which fell in her way,  
Earnest and strong and unwrung,  
Eager of purpose, and proud and brave,  
Manly and noble and young.

### IV.

Unused to the thrill of a woman's touch,  
New to love's passionate joy:  
Prone to believe in a woman's truth—  
So, her legitimate toy.

## V.

She captured it with her lily-white hands,  
She kindled it with a blush,  
She set it a-flame with the mantling glow  
Of her forehead's rosy flush.

## VI.

She braided it in with her golden hair,  
She ensnared it with her smile,  
She dazzled it with her radiant eyes,  
And bewitched it with her guile.

## VII.

She wove it a spell with a glance and sigh,  
Bewildered it with her grace,  
Then parted her crimson lips in surprise  
As it broke before her face !

## VIII.

Ah ! my cousin Flora may play too long,  
And repent of it too late ;  
Love is a terrible thing to transmute  
In the crucible of hate ;

## IX.

And 'twere well if unto my lady fair  
Were the simple art but known,  
Of detecting the pebble polished bright  
From the rarer precious stone.

## X.

For the woman who plays with false and real,  
Coveting both as her gains,  
Finds the true will pass from her eager clasp  
While the counterfeit remains.

## XI.

And it were well in the ruin she wreaks  
If only a heart would break,  
But so often a soul is swallowed up  
In a single heart's earthquake.

## XII.

And the tidal wave of a love betrayed  
In its mighty strength bears down  
The manliness out of a strong man's life,  
And leaveth it there to drown.

## XIII.

So one strong word I would whisper low  
In the ear of my lady fair,  
As she sits 'mid the ruins of broken hearts  
And smiles at the wreck—Beware!

## OUR OWN.

THE child that sports upon our knee  
And clings to our embrace,  
With all the happy witchery  
That lights a childish face—  
If he hath blessed another's arms  
And other birth hath known,  
How coldly do we view his charms  
Beside our fair, "Our Own."

A mansion rears its lofty walls  
With Wealth's impress thereon,  
With stately towers and spacious halls  
And sculptured coping-stone ;  
We upward cast no envious eye  
To note its grandeur lone,  
But, rearing castles in the sky,  
Do loftier build "Our Own."

The world holds forth its glittering arms  
And beckons to its breast,  
Displaying its alluring charms  
'Neath Pleasure's dazzling crest ;



But turning from its subtle art  
Where purer joys are known,  
How sweet to nestle to that heart  
We know is all "Our Own!"

Though lowlier be the vine-clad cot  
Than towering mansions nigh,  
To eyes content it is a spot  
Too dear for wealth to buy.  
There is the kettle's busy song  
Upon the warm hearthstone,  
And joyous faces all day long  
To glad and bless "Our Own."

Of all the wealth of all the world,  
The dearest and the best  
Is where affection's wings are furled  
And loving lips are prest.  
'Tis not the gilded hoard of gold  
That brightens life alone,  
But knowing what we have and hold  
Is honestly "Our Own."

## THE CHURCH-BELL'S LAMENT.

WRITTEN IN THE OLD STONE CHURCH IN FISHKILL  
VILLAGE.

“ **B** IMM ! boom ! ” said an old church-bell,  
As swiftly I hurried by ;

“ Bimm ! boom ! I’ve a tale to tell,  
Oh list to my lonely sigh ! ”  
The night was cold, the air was chill,  
But so mournfully fell the tone,  
It seemed my very heart to thrill,  
And I paused as the bell went on :

“ Bimm ! boom ! I’ve heard strange things  
Come forth from the lips of men,  
And ceaselessly my old tongue swings  
As I think them o’er again.  
’Twas yesternight, in the pale moonlight,  
That a wary plan was told  
To tear me down from my lofty height,  
For the church was growing old.

“ Bimm ! boom ! And I heard them say  
That the building was too small  
For those who wished to come and pray  
To the mighty God of all.

But I looked down and saw all 'round  
Full many a vacant pew,  
And I said, They want but wider ground  
To indulge the wealthy few.

“ They said that the church had rusty grown  
In the wearing hand of Time,  
And no architectural beauty shone  
In the turret where I chime.  
The pews were low, the desk too high  
For the listening flock to hear,  
But I knew the cause was a sleepy eye  
And an inattentive ear.

“ Then louder still their plans were voiced  
And thus the word went round :  
‘ Each stone and timber, joint and joist,  
Let's level with the ground ;  
And in their place a structure grand  
Shall the hand of Fashion rear ;’  
Alas ! that Fashion e'er should stand  
’Twixt God and his creatures here !

“ Bimm ! boom ! in this turret high  
For a century I've swung,  
And tolled the years, as they hurried by,  
With the stroke of my iron tongue ;  
I've watched the battle beneath me here,  
I've seen the victory won ;  
I've rung to the conqueror's heart, good cheer,  
And tolled when his work was done.

“I’ve rung with joy at the infant’s birth,  
I’ve watched his course to fame—  
Seen him embraced by his mother earth  
When back to her arms he came ;  
I’ve watched the gay or saddened files  
As they’ve thronged the old church door ;  
Ah ! many a foot has trod these aisles  
Which ne’er will tread them more.

“I have rung out my merriest peal  
For the maiden’s bridal-day,  
And heard her vow for woe or weal  
Her fresh young life away.  
I’ve seen her brow grow old with years  
In the home she honored well ;  
I’ve seen her grave bedewed with tears  
As I struck her funeral knell ;

“I’ve seen the shadowy churchyard fill  
With forms whose tasks were done ;  
In yonder graveyard, cold and still,  
They’ve gathered, one by one.  
I’ve seen the old, the grave, the gay,  
And youth in its fairest flower,  
Like the leaves of autumn pass away,  
Since I’ve swung in this old church-tower.

“Bimm ! boom ! Oh let no hand  
Be raised to tear me down !  
For Memory’s sake let the old church stand,  
Unscathed by vandal’s frown.

'Tis true the roof is moss-grown now,  
And the lichened walls are gray,  
But there's room for the Christian heart to bow  
And the earnest lip to pray."

The clock struck twelve—the church-bell ceased  
Its sad complaint to croon,  
And a darksome cloud, with silver fleeced,  
Passed off from the full, round moon.  
I looked aloft at the turret gray,  
And dashed away my tears,  
As I prayed the bell, untouched, might stay  
In its home of a hundred years.

## BLOOD!

**A**Y! it is ever thus—"blood, blood!" you cry  
With your well-cut, aristocratic lip;  
Who lacks it, in your scrutinizing eye,  
Lacks every claim to social fellowship.

You prate of proud descent and lines of kings,  
And boast your own ancestral ties to me;  
I love you, ladye fair, for many things—  
Least of them all, your ancient pedigree.

I have found princely natures, noble blood,  
In men your standard would set down as clowns,  
Their dearest ties, the Common Brotherhood—  
Their daily lives, the most ennobling crowns.

Rather had I one such had held the helm  
That launched my pulses on Life's fretful flood,  
Than that a score of princes of the realm  
Had with diluted greatness cursed my blood.

Blood! the line to which drowning pretence clings  
To save itself. Oh such a rotten rope!  
Yet deemed the most acceptable of things  
To lay beneath the social microscope.

A man is what he is in spite of blood ;  
If he have lack of more intrinsic worth  
It matters little be he of the brood  
Of all the proudest Incas of the earth.

Your grandsire was a lord, his sire a duke,  
His sire a prince, as you have evidence—  
Here's an arithmetic which makes blood look,  
To simple eyes, of sorry consequence :

To your grandsire you stand one-fourth related,  
To your greatgrandsire you are eighth by claim ;  
To his proud sire, again, 'tis estimated  
A sixteenth link is all you dare to name.

Here are but three removes—one more again  
Leaves to you but a thirty-second part—  
Scarcely enough to fertilize a brain  
Or have a marked effect upon the heart.

Should we go farther back, 'twould be to find  
The precious drops become so very few ;  
To see where in yourself they are enshrined  
Would be no easy thing for me or you.

To believe your noble self the sweet result  
Of honest excellence I am content ;  
My heart bows low to worth, but *Deus vult*  
It never shall be fettered to *descent*,

Nor to the shallow sophistry of *clique*,  
With its white-handed claims to high degree—  
Pure grains of human gold I do not seek  
In such weak rinsings of nobility.

Fools have been known to spring from kings direct,  
And in their idiocy have grown apace,  
While giants in strength and kings in intellect  
Have been the offspring of a peasant race.

I fear, fair ladye, that I am too blind,  
Even with the powerful lens of habitude,  
To honor see in birth alone, or find  
Transmitted greatness in a drop of blood.



## PRESSED FLOWERS.

FOUND IN A BOOK PUBLISHED IN 1704.

### I.

DEAD roses ! crumbling here they lie—  
What is their past history,  
What the unsealed mystery  
Left with these frail flowers to die.  
What lips have tasted their perfume,  
What eyes grown brighter for their bloom,  
What hand did this blue love-knot tie ?

### II.

Pale emblems of some broken dream,  
Broken on the wheel of Time ;  
Ashes of some faith sublime  
Scattered on Life's hurrying stream ;  
Fragrant embers of regret,  
Dead and pale and silent, yet  
Full of eloquence supreme !

### III.

Cold corpses of some perished love,  
Coffined 'twixt these sombre pages,  
'Mid the words of buried sages,

Cherished trifles, ye do prove  
Truer truths than Wisdom preaches,  
Sweeter truths than Science teaches :  
Truths with every age enwove—

## IV.

Truths of Love's dominion telling  
O'er the realms of Life for aye :  
Though the ages roll away ;  
Though the bells of time be knelling  
Strong and loud, and loud and strong,  
Death of old and death of young,  
Death of love they're never telling.

## V.

Come, relics of some bygone trust,  
Come, I have a dead hope too—  
Dead and dumb and cold as you,  
Long left to ruin and to rust.  
Let me lay you by its ashes,  
'Mong its tarnished golden meshes,  
Gently lay you, dust to dust !

## VI.

All the world has its dead roses  
Hidden from the eyes of sages,  
Shut between the heart's still pages ;  
And no look or sign discloses  
How the throb of being centres  
Where the outward never enters, •  
Where some blossom dead reposes !

## DON'T YOU REMEMBER?

### I.

**R**OAMING among the daisies, you and I,  
The tangled drifts of daisies, glad and young,  
Beneath the azure of a cloudless sky,  
The zephyrs catching, as they wander by,  
The tender accents falling from your tongue—  
Don't you remember?

### II.

A country glow upon my girlish cheek,  
As side by side the wooded slopes we rise,  
Or in the fresh spring mould the beech-sprouts seek,  
Or part the rushes by the winding creek,  
Reading sweet secrets in each other's eyes—  
Don't you remember?

### III.

The soft wind tossing back my light brown hair,  
The robins building in the apple trees ;  
A scent of roses on the morning air,  
The birth of buds about us everywhere,  
A warm and tender gladness on the breeze—  
Don't you remember?

## IV.

The brook that leaped adown the mountain height  
And sped away, nor ever looked behind  
As if it feared the stern old mountain might  
Find out the secret of its hasty flight,  
And follow on its truant feet to bind—  
Don't you remember?

## V.

The hills we climbed through merry baths of dew  
To catch the sun's light on our laughing faces,  
Ere he should cast his beams on hearts less true  
Than yours to me, love, or than mine to you,  
Wasting the treasure of his first embraces—  
Don't you remember?

## VI.

The stream meandering through the vale below,  
The marshy meadow's reedy banks between,  
Where the coquettish cowslips flirted so  
With every breeze, or bent their bright lips low  
And kissed the water from their beds of green—  
Don't you remember?

## VII.

The bit of river southward of the town,  
Pale in the dawn, like some gray lock of hair  
That Winter might have clipped from his old crown,  
And given to Spring to keep when he was gone,  
In kindly memory of him to wear—  
Don't you remember?

## VIII.

The pollard willow, where the honey-bees  
Gave concerts in the branches all day long,  
The blackbirds whistling in the hickory trees,  
The bob-o'-link on a milkweed in the breeze,  
Almost committing suicide with song—  
Don't you remember?

## IX.

The fallen petals by the fruit trees given  
To drape with white the emerald robes of May,  
Along the country lanes and roadsides driven,  
As if some young bride in her flight to heaven  
Her bridal wreath had scattered on the way—  
Don't you remember?

## X.

The blood-root that came up with such a shriek  
Whene'er we pulled it from its hiding-places,  
The plants and mosses that we used to seek,  
While Earth with her rent bosom could not speak,  
But as we robbed her breathed hard in our faces—  
Don't you remember?

## XI.

The old beech-woods, upon the hillside steep,  
Where the wild ladyslippers always grew,  
Fair golden harvests that you loved to reap—  
Sweet golden harvests that I loved to keep—  
Blessed by the sunshine and baptized with dew—  
Don't you remember?

## XII.

The quaint old garden with its graveled walks,  
Its grass-plots starred with golden dandelions,  
Its daffodils, May-pinks and hollyhocks,  
Its white syringa with sweet-smelling stalks,  
And neighbors coming after slips and scions—  
Don't you remember?

## XIII.

There, 'neath my chin, you held the buttercup,  
Some truth you saucily declared to prove ;  
Then cried, when bashfully my eyes would droop,  
“A girl's blush is the flag her heart runs up  
To signal its surrender unto Love!”—  
Don't you remember?

## XIV.

And then you clasped my brown hand in your own—  
You know how willfully you could persist—  
There was a strange new music in your tone,  
Thrilling and sweet—well—we were all alone,  
I may mistake, but were my lips not kissed?—  
Do you remember?

## XV.

Then how the village-bells rung out one day,  
How joyfully we two walked side by side ;  
The church door opened and we knelt to pray,  
Friends crowded 'round their kindly words to say,  
And shake your hand, and some one called me  
bride—  
Don't you remember?

## XVI.

Our bark, since then, has touched on many strands,  
Our wandering feet have roamed in many climes,  
Our brows been kissed by suns of far-off lands;  
New friends, dear love, have clasped our willing hands,  
But the old times—the ever-dear old times—  
We both remember.

P

## CREED.

### I.

I BELIEVE if I should die,  
And you should kiss my eyelids when I lie  
Cold, dead and dumb to all the world contains,  
The folded orbs would open at thy breath,  
And from its exile in the isles of death  
Life would come gladly back along my veins !

### II.

I believe if I were dead,  
And you upon my lifeless heart should tread,  
Not knowing what the poor clod chanced to be,  
It would find sudden pulse beneath the touch  
Of him it ever loved in life so much,  
And throb again, warm, tender, true to thee.

### III.

I believe if on my grave,  
Hidden in woody deeps or by the wave,  
Your eyes should drop some warm tears of regret,  
From every salty seed of your dear grief,  
Some fair, sweet blossom would leap into leaf,  
To prove death could not make my love forget.



## IV.

I believe if I should fade  
Into those mystic realms where light is made,  
And you should long once more my face to see,  
I would come forth upon the hills of night  
And gather stars, like fagots, till thy sight,  
Led by their beacon blaze, fell full on me !

## V.

I believe my faith in thee,  
Strong as my life, so nobly placed to be,  
I would as soon expect to see the sun  
Fall like a dead king from his height sublime,  
His glory stricken from the throne of time,  
As thee unworth the worship thou hast won.

## VI.

I believe who hath not loved,  
Hath half the sweetness of his life unproved ;  
Like one who, with the grape within his grasp,  
Drops it with all its crimson juice unpressed,  
And all its luscious sweetness left unguessed,  
Out from his careless and unheeding clasp.

## VII.

I believe love, pure and true,  
Is to the soul a sweet, immortal dew  
That gems life's petals in its hours of dusk—  
The waiting angels see and recognize  
The rich crown jewel, love, of Paradise,  
When life falls from us like a withered husk.

## A TOAST.

GIVEN ON THE BIRTH-DAY ANNIVERSARY OF J. B.  
SLAWSON.

OUR host—to-day around his board we meet  
In mutual joy his natal day to greet ;  
Honor to pay the well-spent years of one  
Whose race, we pray, is yet not halfway run.  
Could all whom he has blest be here this hour,  
Hearts heaped with love would be his birth-day dower,  
And many a lip, unseen by us to-day,  
Smiles o'er the sorrows he has turned away.  
Fill up your glasses, gentle friends, fill high—  
Drink to the generous heart that's never dry,  
Drink to the lip o'er its own good deeds dumb,  
Drink to our host—fill high, a bumper, come—  
Long life, good friends, good fortune be his own,  
Blessings spring thick from all good seeds he's sown,  
And may Old Age, when wandering this way,  
His silver banner long forget to lay  
Above the honored brow we toast to-day.

## TO-WHOO!

**A**N old owl sat in a willow tree  
Crying aloud, Who will shelter me?  
Flapping his wings in the heavy dew,  
And mournfully muttering "Whoo, whoo, whoo?  
Who'll give me shelter," the poor bird said—  
"Me without refuge or board or bed,  
With a broken heart and an aching head,  
And wings as heavy, as heavy as lead—  
Freezing out here in this villainous dew—  
Who will be good to me? whoo, whoo, whoo?"

A young owl sat in an opposite tree,  
His fine feathers picking right lazily.  
He listened a while to the other's complaint,  
But hadn't the patience, you know, of a saint;  
So he cried, "Who'll shelter your old gray head?  
Fool! if you're poor you might better be dead.  
A sexton, never a banker, I trow,  
Is the man to call when your purse gets low—  
The crowd makes room for a corpse to pass through—  
If his coffin be pine, no one asks, whoo, whoo?"

“Whence comes this voice?” cried the elder owl,  
With trembling tone and ominous scowl;  
“Shall you, then, never be old and gray,  
That you fling your impudent taunt this way?  
Where were you born, and where were you raised,  
And which of your parents, pray, was crazed,  
That you were not taught with rod and rule  
Your rude, impertinent tongue to school?  
Rare birds have they been that feathered you:  
Who were they, young gentleman—whoo, whoo,  
whoo?”

“My father,” the younger owl replied,  
“Was a prime old ‘governor,’ full of pride;  
I drank his wine, on his funds had fun,  
And he applauded this son of a gun.  
His wife, ‘the old lady,’ was fond of a lark—  
Her day, like Fashion’s, began after dark.  
She gave me a taste for wandering from home,  
And my favorite air was, ‘I love to roam.’  
I soon cut them both and away from them flew;  
Who wants such old shackles about him—whoo,  
whoo?”

“Where were you born?” the elder owl cried,  
Holding his heavy wings close to his side.  
“In the chestnut tree,” was the quick reply,  
“Farmer Top-knot’s henroost very close by.”  
“Alas! and alas!” groaned the elder owl,  
“You’re my own lost child, you ungrateful fowl!  
I am breathing my last; come hold up my head—  
Receive my last gasp for I’m very near dead—  
What child was e’er petted as I petted you?  
Tell me that, you young rascal—whoo, whoo, whoo?”

In vain did the old owl mutter and moan,  
He was left in his willow tree all alone.  
His child had fled far from the cheerless spot,  
Nor offered to ease the other's hard lot.  
There the old fellow thought of his son in health,  
With plenty of chickens and wholesome wealth,  
Leaving him under that lowering sky,  
Advising him, too, to make haste and die !  
And he moaned, as he sat there feeble and cold,  
" It is hard to be desolate when we are old !"

Then he thought, " Did I teach him his duty when  
    young?  
Lies the fault with him or with those whence he  
    sprung?  
O fathers and mothers, the sapling small  
Must be trained when tender if trained at all !  
Trim up the shoots that are growing too bold,  
If shelter and shade you'd find there when old."  
With a flutter and mutter and shivering groan,  
A few sad tears and an unheard moan,  
The owl fell dead, and no mortal knew  
Nor asked, as they kicked him aside, whoo, whoo?

## THE SUICIDE.

THE stars on high,  
And the young moon in the summer sky  
Drifting, like some lone canoe,  
O'er its seas of jeweled blue—

“I walk by the river,  
Where rushes quiver,  
And the dull moan and monotone  
Of surging waters fill mine ear—  
Alone, alone, alone, alone!  
I clasp my hands and wander here.”

I see the gleam  
Of quivering star-lamps on the stream,  
As if the beacons they might be  
Guiding the river to the sea.

“I pause and listen  
While they glisten  
On the slow but steady flow  
Of river sweeping to the sea—  
Echo, echo, echo, echo  
Only cometh back to me.”

“I hush my heart—

I watch the mystic night-birds dart  
From sea to land, from land to sea,  
Like restless souls in misery.

The rolling river  
Sweeps on for ever  
To depth unknown, where stars shine down  
On treasures hid by the miser sea—  
Alone, alone, alone, alone!  
No voice, no words, no love for me!

“For evermore

On rolling wave, by reedy shore,  
Must mine eyes see no other fate,  
My heart beat on so desolate?

O rushing river,  
Bear on for ever  
My weary soul, where darkly roll  
The deep streams of eternity—  
In thy strong arms enfold, enfold  
The heart that gives its life to thee!”

The stars on high,  
The slender moon in the silent sky,  
Drifting like some spirit bark  
O'er its seas of starry dark—

The river flowing,  
God only knowing  
What its flight hides out of sight,  
As on it rushes to the sea—  
Alone, alone, alone, alone!  
Drifting to eternity!

## TWILIGHT.

### I.

I WANDERED forth at set of sun  
The harvest work was almost done,  
And closed were doors of barn and bin,  
Shutting the garnered harvest in.

### II.

Down to the sunset-tinted stream  
To drink was led the tired team ;  
And lowing cattle from the hill  
Strolled homeward past the silent mill.

### III.

Then came some love-belated swain  
Whistling upon his load of grain,  
While here and there the bending leaves  
Gave kisses to the ripened sheaves.

### IV.

The wild flowers on the steep side-hill  
Drew close together with a thrill,  
Whispering, 'mid twilight's dewy tears,  
Love tales into each other's ears.



## V.

Beside the farmer's cottage door  
The father held his babe once more,  
While little ones, by twos and threes,  
Were clustered at his sturdy knees.

## VI.

I saw no sin, no shame, no frown,  
And as Night drew her curtain down  
She said, "Content is Life's best store ;  
Go teach thy heart to ask no more !"

## TRUST.

**B**E of good cheer ; the sorrows we lament  
We yet shall know as mercies kindly meant—  
Angels pass into hearts by sorrow rent,  
All in the Lord's good time !

The cloud will pass, the sun will shine again,  
The bow of promise arch the angry main,  
Peace follow storm and pleasure follow pain,  
All in the Lord's good time !

The wound will heal, the burden will grow light,  
The wandering footsteps will be guided right,  
The thorniest path seem paved with blessings bright,  
All in the Lord's good time !

Grief's sobs will turn to smiles ; the lip of woe,  
The radiant light of love and joy shall know,  
And Faith will triumph at Doubt's overthrow,  
All in the Lord's good time !

Though life's bleak waves are tempest-tossed and chill,  
The Master's voice will utter, " Peace, be still"—  
The raging billows bow before his will,  
All in the Lord's good time !

And we, the brittle toys by Time resigned,  
Tossed from his wearied hands, bruised, broken, blind,  
The heights of everlasting life shall find,  
All in the Lord's good time !

## FALLACIA.

DREAMING here while stars are paling  
On the brow of night again,  
While the winter winds are wailing  
And the moon is on the wane—  
Dreaming here, weaving fancies—  
Fancies for my busy brain.

Dreaming here with tear-drops welling  
From a heart whose hopes are vain—  
Heart with proud ambition swelling,  
Swelling but to sink again—  
Dreaming here, weaving fancies—  
Fancies from a fevered brain.

Dreaming here while music's measure  
O'er the earth sweeps wild refrain,  
And the thoughts I've loved to treasure  
Thrill my spirit-harp again—  
Dreaming here, weaving fancies—  
Fancies from my throbbing brain.

Dreaming here, alone and lonely,  
    " What," I whisper—" what is fame?  
Pierian sisters, tell me only  
    What it is that men call fame—  
    Toiling for it, dying for it,  
    Hearts aglow and souls aflame?"

Shines the moon on frozen waters—  
    Ghostly moon on ghostly snow—  
Silent all Mnemosyne's daughters,  
    Comes no whisper sweet and low—  
    " Speak," I plead, " ye fabled Nine,  
    Tell me what I fain would know."

Waiting here, alone and lonely,  
    " What," I ask ye, " what is fame?"  
Coldly comes the answer, " Only  
    Shade of shadow, hollow flame—  
    Dreamer's vision, poet's fancy,  
    Mocking tempter, empty aim !

" *Ignis fatuus*, fatal wooer,  
    Flushing fairest as it flees,  
Leaving its deceived pursuer  
    'Midst the fierce Eumenides,  
    With their fearful fingers tearing  
    At the vitals of his ease.

" Winsome traitor, fleeting pleasure,  
    Very fair and very false,  
Stealing all the golden treasure  
    From the soul's unguarded vaults—  
    Leaving but the cold, gray ashes  
    Of the pure flame that exalts.

“ Luring, laughing, gayly mocking,  
Swift within the soul to creep,  
In Ambition’s cradle rocking  
Feverish dreams that will not sleep—  
Will not hide their glaring eyeballs—  
Will not, will not silence keep.

“ On the shore where waves are beating  
Write thy name upon the sand ;  
Lo ! the waters, when retreating,  
Bear it from the silent strand—  
Ask them for the vanished writing—  
Writing written by thy hand !

“ Saw you not the letters written  
Clear and fair when first you came ?  
Saw you not the white sand smitten  
Smooth as marble ? *This is Fame—*  
Fame the tempter, Fame the robber—  
Robbing life to make a name !”

From the shadows thus the voices  
Answered me in startling strain,  
Saying, “ Well the heart rejoices  
When its bitter foe is slain”—  
Saying, “ Dreamer, dream no longer—  
Take Life’s real road again.”

Asks my heart, the voice defying,  
“ If the poet’s gift be mine,  
Must I thrust it dead or dying  
From its altar-stone divine ?—  
Must I quench its fires immortal—  
Radiant fires I know are mine ?

“ Quench them with the bitter water  
Of renunciating tears,  
Tell my soul that thou hast taught her  
Something worse than all her fears—  
Stretching hopes, like sudden corpses—  
Out, unshrouded, on their biers?

“ Must I lay my fingers tightly  
At the red roots of my heart,  
Rending out the joys unsightly  
Thou hast named the poet’s art—  
Dying in my songless silence—  
Chosen as the better part?

“ Eos, then, and Leto, hear me!  
By thy stars and by thy dawn!  
By the midnight drawing near me,  
By the gloom—hours creeping on—  
Life is stricken of its sweetness—  
Life beholds its glory gone.”

Came the voice, “ Nay, poet-maiden,  
Keep thy gifts from sudden death!  
Keep thy songs, and keep them laden  
With the poet’s noblest breath—  
Breath whose sweetest aspirations  
Words of cheer to others saith.

“ Sing the infant to its slumbers,  
Sing the dying to his rest;  
Pour the music of thy numbers  
In the sinner’s guilty breast—  
Lay the poet’s balm of healing  
On the heart of the oppress.

“ Sing to earth’s defilèd daughters  
Songs embalmed in mercy’s dew,  
Sweeter far than flowing waters  
Which the famed Macænas knew—  
Lead the footsteps of the wanderer  
By thy songs to pathways new.

“ Sing the skeptic from his scorning,  
Sing the sinner from his shame,  
Sing to Error earnest warning—  
Sing, O poet ! not for fame—  
Fame the tempter, Fame the mocker—  
Shade of shadow, empty aim !”

In the shadows die the voices,  
Fades the Presence from the room,  
Dream of Fame, retreating poises  
On its pinnacle of doom !  
Poet’s vision, dreamer’s fancy—  
Leto cradles in her gloom.



## INVOCATION.

COME to me, Sleep !  
Thy silent seal upon my forehead set ;  
Weave o'er mine eyelids thy mysterious net,  
Bring me oblivion without regret—  
Teach fond memory to forget !

Come to me, Sleep !  
Shut out the glaring grievances of day,  
Thy soothing hand upon my sore heart lay,  
Close to the bank where Death's cold waters play,  
Guide and lead me safe away !

Come to me, Sleep !  
For me the visions of thy dreamland paint,  
Hush on my lip each wearisome complaint,  
Break from my soul the shackles of restraint,  
Cheer the spirit prone to faint !

Come to me, Sleep !  
Shut me a while outside the world's great gate,  
And, ere I know again my mortal state,  
Teach me to fearless face my frowning fate,  
Bravely still to watch and wait.

THE LOVER TO THE BLUE RIBBON THAT  
HAD TIED LAURA'S LETTERS.

A FADED, rumpled, once how dear, a thing !  
I never thought with such indifferent eye  
Its pretty, dainty love-knots to untie,  
Or stigmatize it as a "bit of string !"  
But somehow Cupid wears a restless wing.

The sweet epistles that the ribbon tied  
Have also lost their power to soothe or sting.

I really thought they'd thrill me till I died !  
Strange how Old Time loves to obliterate

A fellow's "deathless love" in this cool way,  
And turn to blessings what seemed "frowning fate,"

And make his angels prove but common clay !  
What this blue ribbon bound I once held higher  
Than life : to-day they lit the parlor fire !

## AT ADA'S TOMB.

POOR is that life so loved its little all  
May hide beneath a coffin and a pall ;  
Content to run its God-allotted term,  
Only to fill a grave or feed a worm !  
Whose chiseled urn alone remains to tell  
That life was his, and that he loved it well—  
Leaves to the world no legacy beside  
The fact that he was born and lived and died,  
And found in life no nobler mission taught  
Than to exist, to perish and be naught !

Thine, gentle being, was the loftier aim  
That shuns the vulgar patronage of fame,  
That held the cup to lips that were athirst,  
And bent the knee for burdened souls sin-curst ;  
That meekly owned the earthly honor sweet  
To pluck the thorns from other bleeding feet ;  
Thine every day, like daisies in the sod,  
A bright but humble offering to thy God.  
Along mine own thy life in beauty lies,  
A path by which to join thee in the skies :  
Thy words, thy smiles, thy kindly deeds remain  
To cheer, exalt, ennoble and sustain !

Back from thy grave, along my lonely days,  
Thy bright existence casts its golden rays,  
Lighting, as sunset lights the clouded west,  
Joys thou didst plant within my stricken breast.

In hours when anguish most my heart enthralls  
Thy memory, like a benediction, falls,  
And like some sweet Gregorian chant I hear  
Thy life's sweet melody upon mine ear.  
The vesper-bells of love above thy tomb  
Mingle their chimes with hope's perpetual bloom,  
And 'mid the toils of earth and earthly things  
I hear the beating of an angel's wings!

## FAIR COZ.

### I.

“**W**HAT is that in your hair, fair coz,  
What is that in you hair?”  
“’Tis a gem of exceeding beauty and size,  
Of Brazilian mines—a marvelous prize ;  
’Tis a jewel white with the captured light  
Of ages condensed in a bauble bright—  
A diamond it is called.”

### II.

“A diamond, fairest coz, you say?”  
A bauble, nay, oh nay !—  
’Tis the sweat of a hundred human brows  
Spilled under curses and wrung from blows ;  
’Tis the sinews and strength of a thousand slaves,  
The phosphorent light from a thousand graves—  
’Tis this you have in your hair.

### III.

“What is that on your shoulders, coz—  
Your shoulders so soft and white?”  
“’Tis a bit of exquisite hand-wrought lace  
I would not for worlds have a rent deface—  
A beautiful thing : see the rare design  
Of Indian lilies and tropic vine—  
A *fichu* it is called.”

## IV.

“A bit of lace, you say? Oh no!

I see but a fair young girl  
With toiling fingers and heart full of care,  
Weaving her life in this tracery rare,  
For a cruel crust and a crueler bed,  
A pillow of stone for a virtuous head:  
Of these is your *fichu* made.

## V.

“Of what is your toilette made, fair coz,—

Of what is your toilette made?”

“Of jewels and silks and marvelous lace

Which a princess royal well might grace—

Bracelets of pearl with emerald clasp,

Girdle of gems with a golden hasp:

Of these is my toilette made.”

## VI.

“Of gems and laces and girdles gold?

Of something beside, fair coz.

’Tis made of the bitter and terrible cost

That might have saved hundreds of women lost—

Of eyes that glare with a stony stare

At the iron face of their own despair:

Of these is your toilette made!”

## SONNETS.

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### RENUNCIATION.

MY love died hard—I clutched its snowy throat  
And watched its frantic graspings at my heart—  
Saw its sweet eyes in mortal anguish start—  
Heard its wild cries for mercy overflow  
The blows with which its pleading lips I smote.  
Relentlessly I pressed it to its doom,  
One bitter word upon its forehead wrote,  
Then thrust the dead outside the gates of Gloom.  
I did the murder—ay! this hand so white,  
So soft and pale and womanish a thing,  
Held in its slender grasp what could requite  
Forgotten vows and falsehood's cruel sting.  
I slew it—ay! but dying at the root  
Of Life in flower, it poisoned all the fruit.

## THE MAIDEN.

I MUST send back his letters, and all these  
Sweet tokens of his fond and tender truth?

Love on the lees is bitter wine, forsooth!  
Oh just once more let me, on bended knees,  
Press to my heart its hoard of memories!

These letters, withered flowers—this lock of hair—  
I kiss them, clasp them—God in heaven, who sees

My grief, forgives its passionate despair!  
We quarreled—yes! and for so slight a thing!

How was it? fault of mine, or his? Ah well!  
It brooks not now—there! give him back his ring,

Warm from my hand, and for me say farewell!  
Shall the world mock me? Nay! defend me, Pride!  
But oh! ere this blow came would I had died!



## THE MAN.

YOU heard my bell, Victor ! I rang for you.  
Here ! clear this rubbish from my *escritoire* !  
That last flirtation really gathered more  
Love-tokens—gloves and notes and ribbons blue—  
Than I supposed ; throw them all out of door ;  
I do not want them lumbering up my room—  
Ah ! what is that ? A little sprig of rue ?  
It does not smell well, 'pon my word. Exhume  
The other trinkets and that lock of hair  
From yonder secret drawer. I had not thought  
The little lady had so much to spare !  
Make haste, you idle fellow, is all out ?  
Well dress me now for Lady Hovey's ball ;  
I meet a new star there—Fay Duvenal.

## TO A CAGED MOCKING-BIRD.

O WILLING warbler—whistler of the wood !  
When sunny zephyrs sweep the soft South land,  
And Spring sows all the soil with scented hand,  
And fringy ferns fan the faint forest flood ;  
Oh, best and blithest of the birdling brood,  
Why do I find thee caroling, captured here,  
Thy mellow, mocking melody imbued  
'Twixt prison bars with all its wildwood cheer?  
Grand *Mæstro* of the tuneful tribes that bide  
Within yon vast cathedral of live-oak ;  
High Priest of plummy poets, sending wide  
The notes which peace, good-will and love invoke.  
Thou teachest, psalmist sweet, how we should rise  
Like thy brave song, above adversities.

## TO ONE BELOVED.

I KNOW, to-night, thou art among the gay,  
The centre of a light and joyous throng,  
Who hang upon thy laugh, thy jest, thy song ;  
I know the dawn will gather, cold and gray,  
And find me waiting thee till break of day.

Our lives together have known no alloy,  
And, dearest, thy delight is mine alway.

Though thou art absent I am with thee now ;  
Thought, like some stalwart swimmer, parts the waves,  
And, eager for the resting-place he craves,

Leaps, nude and glowing, from the amber tide  
Of Memory, and, rushing to thy arms,  
His dripping limbs in thy caresses warms.

## TO MY PEN.

I SCARCE can tell if friend thou art, or foe—  
If most I have to praise thee or to blame.

In the lost years unto my hand you came,  
And when I would I could not let you go.  
That thou hast been a solace oft, I know—

That I have learned to love thee I must own ;  
But this confession scarcely will atone  
For moments spent with thee that I may owe  
To languid leisure or to Fashion's hour.

A duty never yet I left for thee  
Undone or incomplete ; but I have fled,  
Perhaps too oft, the social tyrant's power,  
O pen of mine, to feel myself set free  
When chained to thy sweet tyrannies instead

## LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN.

INTO thy sapphire wave, fair Pontchartrain,  
Slow sinks the setting sun ; the distant sail,  
On far horizon's edge, glides hushed and pale,  
Like some escaping spirit o'er the main.  
The sea-gull soars, then tastes thy wave again ;  
The bearded forests on thy sandy shore  
In silence stand, e'en as they stood of yore  
While yet the red man held his savage reign,  
And daring Iberville's adventurous prow  
As yet had never cut thy purple wave,  
Nor swung the shadow of his shining sail  
Across the bark of the Biloxi brave.  
Ah, placid lake ! where are thy warriors now ?  
Where their abiding-places—where their grave ?

## TO THE MOUSE THAT NIBBLED MY MSS.

AND so, my little friend, you're taking pains  
To prove yourself a bit of a *bas-bleu*—

A most unwise thing, rest assured, to do ;  
For if there's aught on earth " pays bad," 'tis brains ;  
The world, too has a horror of ink-stains.

Last night, I see you tried a simple sonnet,  
The night before some lively love-refrains ;  
You'll be more popular, depend upon it,  
If you restrict yourself to bread and cheese.

Dress well, dance well, make the salute polite,  
At Fashion's altar crook your cringing knees ;

Get drunk, do anything, my friend, but write :  
Take my advice—I warn you from the brink  
Of social suicide by pen and ink.

## SACRAMENTUM AMORIS.

**I**F I should lift my lips to yours,  
What would you do?  
Kiss them and call me friend, perhaps,  
Forget then to be true?

If at your feet I laid my heart  
For you to take,  
Would you do more than lift it up  
To let it fall and break?

If I should send the searching sweep  
Of fasting love  
Down in thy heart's deep well, and brought  
Naught to the brink above,

I there would faint, in sight of draughts  
I might not drink;  
And, famished for the far-down drops,  
Die on the stony brink!

Oh such a shuddering sense I know  
Of fearful dread  
Lest living love of mine seek yours  
And find it icy—dead!

Lest it should seek to warm itself  
In your dear hold,  
And, finding Love's bright fire gone out,  
Die there of cruel cold !

Of all Life's fearful hungerings  
The heart's is worst—  
Unceasing draughts of Love cannot  
Quench Love's unceasing thirst.

And thee I know so sadly well !  
The love divine  
Which my exacting heart would crave  
I know is not in thine !

'Midst thy life's sculptures then, my heart  
Thou may'st not carve—  
Nor yield I thee the living thing,  
Lest thou should'st let it starve !

Yet I may give you all my life  
Unknown to you—  
Content to see you glad and free,  
Whilst I alone am *true*.

To soften with an unseen care  
Thy daily path,  
To give thee, out of my own life,  
The sweetest flower it hath ;

To press from fruits of my best days  
Wine for thy lips,  
And joy to see thee drink, nor taste  
The dregs that my life sips ;



To lead thee with an unseen hand  
To noble things,  
To hear thee give grand utterance  
To grand imaginings ;

To see thee write to all the world  
With mighty pen,  
Made from the plumes of thine own soul,  
Truths for thy fellow-men ;

To see thee pass to all that's best  
Across my heart,  
Unclogged by its exactions fond,—  
This is my chosen part.

So, go thy way without me, nor  
At fate repine ;  
My heart I give not ; but for life  
My soul, my *soul* is thine !

## AT THE WHEEL.

THAT “constant employment is constant enjoyment”

I often have heard the dear old people say ;  
But fuller the measure of my simple pleasure  
If Robin and I were but roaming to-day.

Here I must keep busy, though weary and dizzy,  
Still whirling my wheel and still spinning my thread,  
Though harvests are yellow and bird-notes are mellow,  
And lips of wild roses glow fervent and red !

The path through the meadow lies cool in the shadow,  
The mischievous brook laughs aloud in the vale ;  
The cry of the plover floats tunefully over  
The rattle of oziers that redden the swale.

The bee from the bosom of red-clover blossom  
Has hurried to sip of the buckwheat in bloom ;  
The blush of the thistle, the blackbird's clear whistle,  
Are blent with the summer-day's light and perfume.

The soft wandering gale fills a silvery sail,  
That idly floats by on yon far-away stream,  
And a frail spirit-boat, 'neath the other doth float  
Faintly fair, like some beautiful dream of a dream.

With odor of myrtle the voice of the turtle  
Comes drowsily up from the valley below—  
I hear the dull rapping of woodpeckers tapping  
The bark where the hollow old sycamores grow.

The beetle is humming of autumn days coming,  
And swings in its leaf-hammock hung in the vale—  
The lily gasps faintly, as passionless, saintly,  
It stands in the path of the libertine gale.

The clink, clink of the blade rises clear from the glade,  
Where, sharpening his scythe, stands the whistling  
mower,

While the gossiping crow on his tall hickory bough  
Sits moodily muttering his meaningless lore.

There are mystical fingers whose gentle touch lingers,  
It seems, as I listen, on yon golden plain,  
There blending and shading and lovingly braiding  
The sunbeams astray with the beard of the grain.

With tired hand twirling the wheel that keeps whirling,  
The wearisome spindle I speed all the day—  
With the whirl of the wheel how my brain seems to reel,  
And longs from the dull hum to hurry away!

I shall eagerly watch the first star-ray to catch,  
That shall tell when the sun lieth low in the west;  
When swallows home darting tell day is departing,  
And night brings the toiler sweet guerdon of rest.

Then over the hollow and green summer fallow  
I shall hear the loud summons of co'boss, co'boss;  
While "Lineback" and "Dover," breaths sweetened  
with clover,  
The cool, fragrant pastures come slowly across.

With "Brownie" and "Daisy," milk-laden and lazy—  
The gentle-eyed heifer half standing aloof,  
While the dew-laden grass gently yields as they pass  
To the lingering print of each slowly-raised hoof.

Then away, then away, as dies the long day,  
O'er the path that leads down to the sycamore grove,  
Where dear Robin will wait by the old wicket gate,  
With a smile for my eyes and a heart for my love!









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